

Leadership Is Not About Position: Leading From Behind

*Neil J. Anderson
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah, United States*

ABSTRACT

This symposium paper will enable EFL teachers and program administrators to identify ways in which they are leaders. Leadership cannot be defined solely by one's position. Leadership is the ability to establish a course of direction and recognize actions that need to be taken to move forward on the established path. The rank and file of an organization can demonstrate leadership as well as the administration.

This paper will highlight five aspects that EFL teachers and program administrators can use to lead from behind:

1. Know the direction of the program and recognize when to make course corrections.
2. Develop your own skills as a leader.
3. Know the limits of your stewardship.
4. Help colleagues perform well in their individual stewardships.
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of the work toward the established direction.

INTRODUCTION

During my graduate studies in the master's program in teaching English as a second or foreign language at Brigham Young University, I took a seminar class from Professor Harold S. Madsen. Professor Madsen has established himself as a leader in the field of second language testing. One of the course objectives was for us to become familiar with the names and areas of expertise of the presidents of the professional association, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). That is when I first became familiar with such names as H. Douglas Brown, TESOL president from 1979–1981, and Ruth Crymes, TESOL president in 1979. I learned that Professor Crymes had died in a plane crash on her way to the 1979 Mexico TESOL conference. Other names included Harold B. Allen (1966–1967), TESOL's first president; Mary Finocchiaro (1970–1971), a nonnative speaker of English from Italy; Russell N. Campbell (1971–1972); Betty Wallace Robinett (1973–1974); Christina Bratt Paulston (1976–1977); and Bernard Spolsky (1978–1979). Many of these TESOL presidents wrote the textbooks that we were using in our master's program.

As I have been actively engaged in the profession and the professional association, these people are now more than just names; they are role models of strong leadership.

As I have shared with my colleagues the title of this paper, "Leadership is Not About Position: Leading From Behind," almost all of them have asked what I mean by "leading from behind." Some have wondered if I am suggesting that leaders push from behind. Some have suggested that pushing from behind is not a very effective model of leadership. I agree, but that is not what I mean. The title is written to get all of us thinking about our individual roles as leaders. Each of us is a leader regardless of the title we hold in our current positions. You might be an individual without a title of leadership. You might be a teacher in a program. Teachers can be leaders

within an organization. Teachers can lead from behind, even though they do not hold a leadership title.

One tool that I believe is extremely effective in helping each of us develop as leaders is to keep a leadership journal. Journaling is one way that we can each gain insights into our own experiences as leaders and to record our own development. As you consider the ideas in this paper, I would encourage you to record your impressions in a journal. Begin a journal that is only used to record your development and growth as a leader.

As we focus on the topic of leadership development in this TESOL symposium, I have identified five key questions that I believe every teacher should ask him- or herself. Before reading on, please answer the following questions in your leadership journal: (1) How do you define leadership? (2) What characteristics do leaders possess? (3) How are leaders developed? (4) Do you consider yourself a leader? Why or why not? (5) What leadership characteristics do you possess that allow you to have influence within your sphere of responsibility?

1. How Do You Define Leadership?

Kouzes and Posner (2003) define leadership as a relationship. They say, “Leadership is not about position or title. It’s about caring, about relationships, and about what you *do*” (p. 1). Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, and Switzler (1996) stress that “leadership is an act of balancing competing *wills*” (p. 5). Leaders are those who work with groups of individuals, each of whom may have demands that compete with the demands of others in the group. The leader works to bring some degree of harmony to the competing demands. This to me is an ideal situation to describe the upper-intermediate reading class that I am currently teaching. I have a small class of 11 students; each has different needs and desires. Each places a certain demand on me to help him or her accomplish his or her individual will to develop reading skills. I’m not just a teacher. I am a leader balancing the competing wills of the students in my classroom.

2. What Characteristics Do Leaders Possess?

In your leadership journal, what leadership characteristics did you identify? A list of common characteristics of effective leaders include vision, empowerment, goal setting, competence, and problem-solving skill. I will discuss characteristics later in more depth.

3. How Are Leaders Developed?

McCauley and Van Velsor (2004) define leader development “as the expansion of a person’s capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes. Leadership roles and processes are those that facilitate setting direction, creating alignment, and maintaining commitment in groups of people who share common work” (p. 2). Notice that with this definition, McCauley and Van Velsor focus on the growth that individuals experience in their leadership roles. Taking responsibility for our own growth is essential for each of us as leaders.

4. Do You Consider Yourself a Leader? Why or Why Not?

I would hope that each of you responded with a strong, affirmative answer to this question. Every teacher, administrator, curriculum developer, test developer, or language supervisor is a leader. Why? Because we interact with learners and others engaged in language education contexts. We each have ideas about how classes should be taught, about how learners should

learn, about how tests should be written. Lieberman and Miller (2004) indicate that “teachers

should become leaders in curriculum, instruction, school redesign, and professional development and that the real power to improve achievement [lies] with teachers” (p. 8).

We each have opportunities each day to influence someone within our profession. When we look at leadership in this way, we need to wonder if we are having a positive or a negative influence on others. As I interact with many teachers around the world and we discuss the ideas of leader development, the vast majority tell me that they do not consider themselves leaders. They say, “I’m just a teacher.” This is a phrase that I wish we could eliminate from our vocabulary.

5. What Leadership Characteristics Do You Possess That Allow You to Have Influence Within Your Sphere of Responsibility?

I cannot provide for you a list of the characteristics that enable you to influence others. We can identify within the literature of leadership development the characteristics that positive leaders possess and from that list we can each determine the degree to which we possess that characteristic.

Hoppe (2004) reports on research at the Center for Creative Leadership that identifies 22 universal characteristics of an outstanding leader. The list includes trustworthy, just, honest, foresight, plans ahead, encouraging, positive, dynamic, motive arouser, confidence builder, motivational, decisive, excellence-oriented, dependable, intelligent, effective bargainer, win-win problem solver, administratively skilled, communicative, informed, coordinator, and team builder.

This list provides a good place for each of us to begin examining the characteristics we possess (or do not possess) as we each seek to develop our skills as leaders and to lead from behind.

I invite each reader to identify three ways that you are or can be a leader. Record your response in your leadership journal. As I have suggested, leadership is not about position but about your attitude and desire to move forward in accomplishing the goals established within an organization or program. McCauley and Van Velsor (2004) emphasize that

Rather than classifying people as “leaders” or “nonleaders” and focusing our work on developing “leaders,” we believe that all people can learn and grow in ways that make them more effective in the various leadership roles and processes they take on. This process of personal development that improves leader effectiveness is what we understand leader development to be all about. (p. 3)

I encourage language educators to make a list of characteristics of leaders and place the list in a visible place in their offices. If we regularly review a list of the characteristics that we are seeking to develop within our roles as leaders, we will be more effective in developing those characteristics. The time that we take to develop as leaders will enable us to be more effective in all aspects of our lives.

FIVE WAYS TO LEAD FROM BEHIND

Let us consider together five areas in which we can work to develop as leaders and effectively lead from behind.

1. Know the direction of the program and recognize when to make course corrections.
2. Develop your own skills as a leader.
3. Know the limits of your stewardship.
4. Help colleagues perform well in their individual stewardships
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of the work toward the established direction.

1. Know the Direction of the Program and Recognize When to Make Course Corrections.

Perhaps one of the most effective ways that we as leaders can know the direction of the program in which we work and recognize when we need to make course corrections is through the development of a personal or program mission statement and strategic plan. The following four steps may be useful in this effort.

Step 1. What is strategic planning?

Strategic planning involves identifying the direction that you desire to go as an individual or within an organization. Strategic planning involves more than setting goals. It involves envisioning what influence you wish to have within your sphere of responsibility. Strategic planning involves making specific changes in what you as an individual or an organization do to accomplish your plan. Rowley and Sherman (2001) define *strategic planning* as “a set of decisions that are designed to create a competitive advantage in order to achieve an organization’s goals and objectives” (p. 202). As a leader you should want to create for yourself or your organization an advantage that will help you be the very best teacher, administrator, test developer, or curriculum designer and for your program to be the best at what you offer your learners. Strategic planning is the process of identifying that competitive advantage. Step 2 in this process gives some specific tools for creating your strategic plan.

Step 2. Assessing the status of your group or organization.

This step in the process includes three parts: (1) creating a mission statement, (2) participating in what is called a *historical sign-in*, and (3) participating in a SWOT analysis.

Creating a mission statement. Each of us should articulate our personal mission statement. Who are we and what do we believe are the unique contributions that we can make? Covey (2004) encourages us to identify and create passions in life. He says, “The key to creating passion in your life is to find your unique talents and your specific role and purpose in the world” (p. 76). I believe that our individual mission statements ought to be written describing our passions for being engaged in second language teaching and learning. The mission statement gives us an opportunity for an in-depth view of what we believe we can contribute to the world. I have created my own mission statement and identified the key roles that I have in my life. The role descriptions I have created for myself include individual, son-brother-husband-father-grandfather, professor, researcher, and program administrator. In each of these roles, I have articulated for myself what I believe my reason for being is. My mission statement is a living document. I have a copy that I review regularly and update as my roles and responsibilities change.

Organizations can create mission statements as well. TESOL has a mission statement:

TESOL's mission is to ensure excellence in English language teaching to speakers of other languages.

TESOL values

- professionalism in language education
- individual language rights
- accessible, high quality education
- collaboration in a global community
- interaction of research and reflective practice for educational improvement
- respect for diversity and multiculturalism

You can learn more about this mission statement and about TESOL's strategic plan by going to the association's Web site at tesol.org/ and clicking on "Association."

My intensive English program has also created a mission statement.

The English Language Center is committed to excellent teaching of English as a second language and dedicated service. We work together to accomplish this by:

- Educating students using the best methods and technology available
- Sharing our expertise and resources with the Church and community
- Promoting cutting-edge research
- Inspiring a gospel-centered lifestyle
- Training faculty in teaching, administration, and curriculum development

I provide these two examples for you to see how specific the mission statements are as well as how short they are. Once the mission statement is in place, the strategic plan can naturally emerge.

Historical sign-in. A historical sign-in provides individuals with a perspective of an organization's history. I have participated in historical sign-in activities where a very long piece of butcher paper is placed on the wall with key dates identified across the paper. A set of questions is then asked and individuals sign in by recording their name on the time line at the appropriate date. An example of the kinds of questions that could be asked include

- When were you first aware of the organization?
- When and how did you first become involved?
- When did you become a *trustee*?
- What was the image of the organization at that time?
- What was happening in the external world (local, national, international) at that time? How was the organization affected by those events?
- What was happening in the internal world (inside your organization)?
- Who are key individuals who have shaped your organization? What role did they play in influencing and shaping the life of the organization?
- What groups or individuals does your organization most want to influence? Why?

Once you have a visual perspective on the answers to these questions, you begin to get historical information about why certain decisions and/or policies have been made within an organization. Perhaps you have often wondered why certain things happen the way they do in your program. By participating in a historical sign-in activity, you can get a historical overview that will answer your questions.

SWOT Analysis. A SWOT analysis is an opportunity to examine Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. I believe that individuals as well as organizations or programs can engage in a SWOT analysis to address the following issues:

- **S:** List the major strengths of your organization as it faces the next 3–5 years.
- **W:** List the major weaknesses of your organization as it faces the next 3–5 years.
- **O:** List the major opportunities that you believe your organization will face in the next 3–5 years that will determine whether it succeeds or fails.
- **T:** List the major threats that you believe your organization will face in the next 3–5 years that will determine whether it succeeds or fails.

Step 3. Developing a draft strategic plan for your organization.

Having created a mission statement, engaged in a historical sign-in and a SWOT analysis, you are ready to draft your strategic plan. There are a variety of formats to use in drafting your plan. Three possibilities include a *scenario approach*, a *critical issues approach*, or a *goal approach*.

Scenario approach. In this approach, a narrative is written that writes your success story before it happens. The scenario approach can include the following elements: Identification of major scenarios for the future, evaluation of the scenarios, selection of the preferred scenario, and then testing and refining the scenario. The scenario outlines for you what you desire to accomplish and how you'll know when you have accomplished it.

Critical issues approach. This method involves identifying the critical issues facing your organization, sequencing the issues in a way that allows you to balance them, resolving each of the issues, and checking to see that you have developed a clear, sound strategy for your organization. One effective way to identify the critical issues that you or your organization should be dealing with is to engage others in telling you what they think. When you involve others in the process, preparing a strategic plan will be more meaningful for everyone who will be affected by the plan.

Goal approach. This approach to drafting your strategic plan involves setting goals, identifying possible strategies or objectives to reach each goal, selecting the best strategies for reaching the goals, and outlining specific plans to accomplish each goal.

The approach you select in drafting your strategic plan should meet your needs. Do not be so concerned about how others have drafted their plans, but be concerned about what way will best help to know the direction of the program and recognize when to make course corrections.

Step 4. Additional activities.

Once you have engaged in the activities for knowing the direction of your program, four additional activities may be helpful. These activities are effective in knowing when to make course corrections: *Implement the plan*, *monitor the plan*, *take corrective action*, and *update the plan*.

I give you one caution. Sometimes leaders make course correction too quickly. I encourage you to be flexible and let your strategic plan guide you for a period of time without changing it until you have adequate information that a true course correction is needed.

2. Develop Your Own Skills as a Leader.

The second aspect of developing as a leader and leading from behind is to develop your own leadership skills. I provide here five suggestions for how you can take responsibility for your own development as a leader:

- a. Attend workshops and sessions like this TESOL symposium.
- b. Attend the TESOL leadership development certificate program.
- c. Read books on leadership development.
- d. Access leadership Web sites.
- e. Explore professional associations dedicated to leadership development.

a. Attend workshops and sessions like this TESOL symposium.

The TESOL symposium on leadership development is an ideal opportunity to focus your attention on how you can develop as a leader. By the time you read this publication, you will have experienced the symposium. My challenge to you is to read all of the symposium papers and identify what you need to do to develop your own skills as a leader.

Leaders do not develop over night. Time is essential in the process, so do not expect an instant change. The principles taught in the TESOL symposium on leadership may be one tool you can use to develop as a leader.

b. Attend the TESOL Leadership Development Certificate Program.

In 1999 TESOL launched a new professional development opportunity that is now available to all TESOL members: the TESOL Leadership Development Certificate Program.

The program offers participants 12 hours of course time among eight possible workshops to learn more about developing as a leader both within the profession and within the association. Current or former leaders who have served as members of the TESOL Board of Directors facilitate most workshops. To receive the TESOL Leadership Development Certificate, participants must complete all four required workshops and at least two of the four optional workshops. The online workshop will require Internet access. The four required workshops are About TESOL, Dynamic Grassroots Advocacy, TESOL Policy and Governance Issues, and Perspectives on Leadership for TESOL. The optional workshops are Facilitating Groups and Building Teams, Time Management Strategies for English Language Teaching Professionals, How to Run Effective Meetings, and Developing Effective Communication Strategies and Resolving Conflict. LDCP participants have approximately 2 years to complete the program, extending the course work over two conventions.

The cost to TESOL members participating in the 2-year LDCP is a one-time \$75 administrative fee. This fee will be waived if you are continuing with the program from the previous year. Register for the LDCP when you register for the convention. For more information, contact TESOL Education Programs at edprograms@tesol.org.

c. Read books on leadership development.

In addition to participating in TESOL's leadership development events, you can read books on leadership development. Let me briefly highlight five books that have influenced my development as a leader.

(1) Beazley, H., Beggs, J., & Spears, L. C. (2003). *The Servant-Leader Within: A Transformative Path*.

Colleagues of Robert K. Greenleaf, author of *Servant-Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*, have edited this book. It contains three sections: (1) Greenleaf's original edition of his article, "The Servant as Leader." The concept of a leader serving others is outlined in this section. (2) The second section is also a paper written by Greenleaf, "The Teacher as Servant." Greenleaf highlights the important role that teachers play as leaders and as role models for the learners they interact with. (3) The third section contains a 1984 commencement talk that Greenleaf delivered at Alverno College, a Catholic women's college in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in the United States. The book provides exceptional insights on how one can develop leadership skills in leading from behind.

(2) Cashman, K. (1999). *Leadership From the Inside Out: Becoming a Leader for Life*.

A central message of this book is to "remind us that our ability to grow as a leader is based on our ability to grow as a person" (p. 15). The book encourages a reflective approach to transforming ourselves into the type of leader we wish to be. One aspect of the book that I particularly like is the space provided to record your impressions while reading, much like the leadership journal.

Cashman (1999) identifies seven pathways for mastery of "leadership from the inside out":

1. *Personal mastery*: The ongoing commitment to unfolding and authentically expressing who we are (p. 31).
2. *Purpose mastery*: The ongoing discovery of how we express our gifts to add life-enriching value to the world (p. 63).
3. *Change mastery*: Embracing the purposeful learning contained in the unending, creative flow of life (p. 83).
4. *Interpersonal mastery*: The dynamic blending of personal power with synergy power to create value and contribution (p. 107).
5. *Being mastery*: Connecting with the silence and peace of the innermost depth of one's character to support more dynamism, effectiveness, and contribution (p.131).
6. *Balance mastery*: The dynamic centering of our life to build resilience and to enhance effectiveness and fulfillment (p. 153).
7. *Action mastery*: The ongoing commitment to creating value through enhanced authenticity and self-expression (p. 175).

Reading the book enabled me to identify areas in my life that I need to master to be effective in my individual leadership role.

(3) Nair, K. (1994). *A Higher Standard of Leadership: Lessons From the Life of Gandhi*.

Gandhi is perhaps one of the greatest examples of leading from behind. He was not an elected political leader nor was he an appointed religious leader. He chose to live principles of leadership

and help others see how individuals can have a powerful influence within society. This book outlines how to successfully apply leadership lessons from Gandhi’s life. The book is divided into three sections: A Single Standard of Conduct, the Spirit of Service, and Decisions and Actions Bounded by Moral Principles. Nair emphasizes that

we are all leaders. Each one of us is setting an example for someone else, and each one of us has a responsibility to shape the future as we wish it to be. But we must have ideals to guide our conduct if we are to make a positive difference. (p. 139)

This book could serve as a tool to help you to develop as a leader.

(4) Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (1996). *The Balancing Act: Mastering the Competing Demands of Leadership*.

The Balancing Act outlines the struggles that leaders face when balancing various aspects of leadership. The authors stress that

leadership involves bringing competing forces into equilibrium. . . . It’s about bringing people together and creating a common bond. It’s about bringing together diverse groups of people, each with a different set of expectations and list of demands, and arriving at a state of equilibrium. More specifically, leadership is an act of balancing competing wills. (p. 5)

One section of this book that has had a particularly powerful impact on my thinking is the authors’ discussion of *motivation* and *ability*. This discussion helps me when I engage with others to ask myself if there is a lack of motivation or a lack of ability. To take any required action, a person must be both willing and able. Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, and Switzler point out three sources of influence on motivation and ability: *individual*, *social*, and *organizational*. Each has a different effect. Figure 1 (see Patterson et al., 1996, p. 51) helps me to understand these two concepts and the three influences.

Figure. 1. Determining the Influences on Motivation and Ability

	Motivation	Ability
Individual	Do I enjoy the activity itself?	Can I do what is required?
Social	How will others respond to my efforts?	Will others provide me with the help, authority, information, and resources I need?
Organizational	What formal rewards will I receive?	Do our structures / systems / environment facilitate my efforts?

Because of the essential role that leaders play in motivating others, gaining a better understanding of motivation and ability has been especially helpful for me.

(5) Covey, S. R. (2004). *The 8th Habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness*.

Building from the international success of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Covey has recently added an eighth habit. This additional habit highlights finding your own voice and inspiring others to find theirs. Covey encourages each of us to provide models for others, to empower others to lead, and to use our voices wisely to serve others. This book is helping me see the importance of sharing my voice on developing leaders in our profession and how I might serve as a mentor to help other leaders share their voice.

d. Access leadership Web sites.

A fourth tool to help us develop our abilities as leaders is the Internet. Several Internet sites provide resources that we can use to expand and improve our leadership skills. I have identified seven such sites.

(1) *The Center for Creative Leadership*: <http://www.ccl.org/>

This Web site has a particularly useful link to new publications on leadership development. This, as well as many other Web sites, can alert us to new publications that may help us in our quest to develop as leaders. I recently purchased the *Handbook of Leadership Development*, edited by McCauley and Van Velsor, from the Center for Creative Leadership.

(2) *Journal of Academic Leadership*: <http://www.academicleadership.org/>

This online journal is particularly valuable because it addresses leadership in academia. The vast majority of material on leadership development focuses on the field of business. Because TESOL professionals are engaged in academic pursuits, I have found this site valuable in helping me to translate business principles into an academic context.

(3) *Advancing Women in Leadership Online Journal*:

<http://www.advancingwomen.com/awl/awl.html>

I have included this (and the next site) on my list because most teachers and leaders in TESOL are women. Women can have different needs in leadership development. I challenge the women leaders reading this article to evaluate your leadership situation and determine whether you might contribute an article to the journal. Think of how submitting an article for publication could help you develop and enhance your leadership skills.

(4) *Center for Women's Global Leadership*: <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/>

Again, I think that this site is worth examining, particularly if you are a woman leader.

(5) *Leadership for a Changing World*: <http://leadershipforchange.org/>

This site offers a valuable online forum for discussing leadership development. The discussions are archived so that you can see the comments even if you were not able to engage in the discussion yourself.

(6) *The Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership*: <http://www.greenleaf.org/>

This site offers a free downloadable article on servant and teacher leadership, and it lists the Greenleaf Center's international offices in Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Singapore. The fact that the Greenleaf Center has offices outside the United States shows that it is trying to reach

beyond a leadership model based in a single country.

(7) *The 8th Habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness*:

<http://www.stephencovey.com/8thHabit/8thhabit.html>

This site provides valuable resources for those reading the book, but they are just as useful for those who are not. It has tools to gain insights into developing your leadership voice and helping you to develop others.

This is a very small sample of Web sites dedicated to the development of leaders. To find additional sites and resources, I suggest that you do a Google search at <http://www.google.com>.

e. Explore professional associations dedicated to leadership development.

Below is contact information for four professional associations designed to help individuals develop as leaders.

National Center for Nonprofit Boards
2000 L St., NW, Suite 510
Washington, D.C. 20036-4907 USA
Tel. 202-452-6262
Fax 202-452-6299
Web <http://www.ncnb.org/>

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
700 S. Washington St., Suite 200
Alexandria, Virginia 22314 USA
Tel. 703-836-0774
Fax 703-836-7864
Web <http://www.tesol.org/>

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
1703 N. Beauregard St.
Alexandria, VA 22311 USA
Tel. 703-578-9600
Web <http://www.ascd.org>

American Society for Training and Development
1640 King St., Box 1443
Alexandria, Virginia, 22313-2043, USA
Tel. 703-683-8100
Fax 703-683-8103
Web <http://www.astd.org/astd>

These associations may provide you with additional ways to develop and expand your leadership skills.

3. Know The Limits of Your Stewardship.

Merriam-Webster Online defines *stewardship* as “the office, duties, and obligations of a steward or the conducting, supervising, or managing of something; especially the careful and responsible

management of something entrusted to one's care" (Merriam-Webster, 2005). Your job description should outline your stewardship. Focus on your stewardship and responsibilities. Do not try to do someone else's job, especially your supervisor's. This aspect of leadership development is important because we often create problems for others and ourselves when we try to assume someone else's stewardship. When you are leading from behind, I caution you to know the limits of your sphere of responsibility.

4. Help Colleagues Perform Well in Their Individual Stewardships.

One of the most powerful ways that we can serve as leaders is to identify others who have strongly developed leadership skills and help them to perform well in their stewardship. In implementing this aspect in my own life, I have found the following questions helpful. Perhaps you can record answers to these questions in your leadership journal.

- a. Whose responsibility is it to nurture new leaders in my educational context?
- b. What can I do to nurture the leadership skills and knowledge in others?
- c. Have any members of my group benefited from my leadership input as a mentor?
- d. Have any members of my group benefited by serving as a mentor to someone else?

I would hope that we can each provide positive and insightful answers to these questions. We can help others by encouraging them to be leaders. Let me share two personal insights. I have benefited from mentors. As I mentioned earlier, I have been influenced by learning about TESOL's leaders. More recently, I have been greatly influenced by five TESOL presidents: Donald Freeman, Denise Murray, Mary Ann Christison, Kathleen Bailey, and David Nunan. These five individuals have served as examples to me of leadership. As I have watched their exemplary leadership, I have learned to develop my own leadership skills. Each of these leaders has extended personal invitations to me to enhance my skills and take on new leadership roles.

As I have been actively involved in TESOL leadership roles, I have tried to identify others who can serve as leaders. Here are two specific examples: I encouraged Suchada Nimmannit from Thailand, who teaches at Chulalongkorn University Language Institute in Bangkok, to run for the TESOL Board of Directors, and I encouraged Jun Liu from China, who teaches at the University of Arizona in Tucson, in the United States, to run for TESOL President. I cannot say that it was easy to encourage these leaders. In the case of Suchada, it took multiple invitations before she said yes. Now, I cannot take responsibility for their decision to run for leadership positions because I know that many others also encouraged them to enhance their leadership skills. My point is that we can each benefit from mentors and from being a mentor.

The role of mentoring is also part of the discussion in Covey's (2004) latest publication. The second part of his book focuses on the role that each of us can play in helping others find their leadership voice.

5. Evaluate the Effectiveness of the Work Toward the Established Direction.

The final aspect of leadership development that I will address involves the importance of ongoing, formative assessment of your success in developing leadership skills. As mentioned earlier, a journal may be an effective tool to help you to reflect on your progress. As you consistently keep a journal over time, it will provide you with a historical record of your development.

I find that the journal is an effective tool for performing an annual, critical review of my leadership direction. This review involves a careful analysis of my personal mission statement. I review my strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats so that I can once again assure myself that I am going in the established direction.

The critical, annual review can often help you prepare for major changes in your life. For example, as I have changed jobs in my career, I have used my mission statement and annual assessments of my progress as tools to help me to decide on new job opportunities. I am confident that evaluating my work in accomplishing my goals has helped me to extend myself and make progress. None of us wants to be stagnant; we should be willing to grow and improve.

CONCLUSION

This article was written to help EFL teachers and program administrators identify ways to serve as leaders. Leadership cannot be defined solely by one's position. Leadership is the ability to establish a course of direction and recognize actions that need to be taken to move forward on the established path.

I have highlighted five aspects that EFL teachers and program administrators can use to lead from behind: (1) Know the direction of the program and recognize when to make course corrections, (2) develop your own skills as a leader, (3) know the limits of your stewardship, (4) help colleagues perform well in their individual stewardships, and (5) evaluate the effectiveness of the work toward the established direction.

Leadership development is not about position. It is about the attitudes that we have toward our stewardships and ourselves. Every teacher engaged in teaching English as a second language should view him- or herself as a leader who will have a significant impact on the learners in his or her classroom and on colleagues.

I challenge you to find ways to enhance your development as a leader. Do not let this article, or the others contained in this volume, sit on a shelf in your office gathering dust. Use this information to lead from behind.

REFERENCES

NOTE: The references cited here include far more than those cited in this article. This list provides resources for TESOL professionals engaged in building leadership skills.

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Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.
700 South Washington Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314 USA
Tel: 703-836-0774
Fax: 703-836-7864
E-mail: tesol@tesol.org
<http://www.tesol.org/>

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