



Unexpected Leadership

ENGAGING WITH REFLECTIVE PRACTICES DURING A TIME OF CRISIS

Project Summary

- ▶ Original project: reflective teaching
- ▶ Emergency shutdown created a leadership vacuum in the workplace and I was asked to step in during the crisis
- ▶ The stress and anxiety at work created an opportunity: I literally could not engage with my original reflective practice project because the context was gone. I could allow this leadership option to stress me out or use my project as a way to explore what kind of leader I wanted to be.
- ▶ I began exploring reflective leadership practices

Personal reflection

- ▶ We've all had a variety of bosses or supervisors. Think about the specific characteristics or actions of a boss you have had that was effective in his or her role.
- ▶ Additionally, name some characteristics or actions of an ineffective, or difficult, boss/supervisor you have had.
- ▶ <https://padlet.com/emccoy19/CRCRTH688>

Specific Reflective Practice- Daily

- ▶ Three daily interventions with specific questions
 - ▶ AM: Name three things you like about yourself as a leader
 - ▶ Midday: check in with your body: you are physically feeling? What do I see, smell, hear? Check in with your anxiety: where is it coming from? What is causing it? Check in with your schedule: what decisions do I still need to make today? Check in with your intentions: is there anything I want to change for the rest of the day?
 - ▶ Ground the Day in Reality:
 - ▶ Who did I interact with?
 - ▶ How did my decisions affect those people?

Additional Reflective Practices

- ▶ Weekly reflective journal
 - ▶ Free-form writing, followed by
 - ▶ What did I do differently this week?
 - ▶ What did I learn about myself this week?
- ▶ Influenced by Brene Brown
 - ▶ *Daring Greatly*
 - ▶ *Unlocking Us* podcast
- ▶ Popular and Academic Reading



**Harvard
Business
Review**

Plan for Practice

- ▶ Continue with daily interventions, at least 3x/week
- ▶ Continue with weekly writing practice, Friday afternoons
- ▶ Create physical and mental space for this practice when I return to physical office space
- ▶ Actively seek out mentorship with new boss regarding leadership lessons and potential
- ▶ Approach promotion process reflectively- do not think of it as forms to fill out but an opportunity to learn more about myself and set further goals regarding my professional development

Evidence Speaks

- ▶ From week #2: *These practices create a reminder that my role is not to please people and make everyone happy; I will fail if I make that my goal. But even if I can't morph into making everyone happy, I can be consistent in the things I'm good at and grow in the places where I need it.*
- ▶ From week #5: *these practices have helped ensure that I pause before jumping to conclusions about how other people are responding and that pause results in empathy and compassion for others.*
- ▶ From week #7: *I also learned that I do avoid conflict in some contexts. I realize that if I'm intimidated, or feel like it's not "my place," I tacitly agree by not disagreeing, which is dishonest. So embracing that, having the courage to disagree with someone in a way that isn't confrontational, or abrasive, these are the things I need to practice next, and I don't know if I would have spent time thinking about that without this project.*