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Five key features of community undergird commitment to diversity in a university or college based on the principles of servant leadership.

Promoting Diversity in Academic Leadership

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> Good leadership fosters change that is both transformative and sustainable. It can be concerned with moral or organizational matters. It can define the college's role in the world beyond its walls, or it can determine the internal dynamics of the institution. Most importantly, it requires a worthy goal—vision, if you will— but it also requires persistence.
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> <div align="right">R. Ekman, 2003</div>

Although Ekman (2003) refers to presidential leadership, his remarks relate directly to the issue of promoting diversity in academic leadership. As colleges and universities define their role and reflect on the moral and organizational aspects of their mission statements, academic administrators must have a vision not only for the basics of a curriculum and the development of a faculty but also for the composition of the student body, faculty, and administration. An effective understanding of this vision and commitment will lead to the establishment of a diverse administrative team (Diamond, 2002).

The most powerful theory of leadership that is supportive of a diverse culture is servant leadership, a theory that first came into prominence when Greenleaf (1970) published *Servant as Leader*. In fact, the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership has produced numerous conferences and articles on the subject. Spears (1998) discusses Greenleaf and defines servant leadership as the creation of a community that "puts serving others—including employees, customers, and community—as the number one priority"

(p. 3). Spears identifies the servant leader as one who first makes "sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served" (p. 3). He then asks the rhetorical question, "Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?" (p. 3). If the institution adopts the theory that leadership must reflect the composition of the constituency and must provide a role model for other leaders, then the leader will recognize that he or she serves the needs of all those represented within the institution.

To produce a diverse community, the leadership team will be committed to five key features of the community:

1. A commitment to understanding other cultures and the value of diversity in leadership positions
2. The understanding and commitment to basic values that flow through the organization
3. The creation of a culture of trust where the diverse organization has a high level of respect for all cultures represented
4. The conscious development of strategies to recruit or provide mobility for women and ethnic minorities within the organization
5. A willingness to be accountable for the success or failure of promoting diversity within the academic leadership—accountable for monitoring and mentoring the leader

Commitment to Understanding Other Cultures

Commitment to understanding other cultures and the value of diversity within leadership is essential to the success of a leadership team within a college or university. Covey (1999) cites research by the Center for Creative Leadership that showed that "respect for the differences in people" is one of the more important qualities of a successful leader (p. 162). Of critical importance is the recognition that the large and small issues relative to culture are important to the success of the leader. The successful academic leader will "understand, appreciate, and motivate" colleagues in a variety of cultures, demonstrating the values evident in all of them (p. 162). On a college campus, it is important for the academic leader to be involved with students representing a variety of cultures by participating in activities that are important to each culture, in essence demonstrating a commitment to the understanding of the culture reflected in the mission of the college and in the lives of the students.

The first building block on which an institution can promote diversity within the academic leadership is to employ leaders who recognize that they must serve all constituents to secure followers from any constituency. Leaders must understand the culture and value diversity and, as Covey says, "have respect for the differences in people" (1999, p. 162).

Understanding and Commitment to Basic Values

The second key to promoting diversity within the academic leadership team is commitment to basic values. Embedded in those values must be a clear understanding of the multicultural dimensions of an institution that respects the traditional values of various cultures. Bordas (1995) says, "Many women, minorities, and people of color have long traditions of servant leadership in their cultures. Servant leadership has very old roots in many of the indigenous cultures, cultures that were holistic, cooperative, communal, intuitive, and spiritual" (p. 10). The cultural roots of servant leadership are grounded in the values inherent in a community and the necessity for leadership to reflect these values. If an academic leader is to be successful, he or she must believe in the values that are evident in the multicultural population of the college or university. It is not enough to include value statements in the institution's vision. It is essential to incorporate such values as respect, service, and equity into the decisions made by the administrator. Out of this will come a culture of trust.

Culture of Trust

Leaders often fail because they do not consistently work toward a culture of trust. Understanding what is meant by the values of respect, service, and equity helps to establish this culture. Respect for oneself, others, and the culture of the various individuals who are represented on campus is essential. For example, colleges and universities must provide the means for various ethnic minorities to celebrate their cultures. Whether they are Indian, African American, Asian, Native American, or Hispanic, ethnic minorities belong to cultures that embody the values of respect, service, and equity, which are demonstrated in various celebrations. Indeed, many cultures have a spiritual dimension that must be respected, and out of the spiritual dimension generally comes an understanding of serving other people. To be successful in the climate of diversity and to maintain a healthy institution, administrative decisions must reflect a true understanding of the values of respect, service, and equity that are embodied in the culture of the diverse groups represented on campus.

A commitment to understanding other cultures and the basic values reflected in the various cultures is a critical step in establishing a culture of trust. Bordas (1995) asks, "Whom does the servant leader serve?" She answers this question by drawing on the principles expressed by Greenleaf, but she takes the answer a step further and says, "Just as a servant leader is a servant first and begins with a natural feeling that one wants to serve, seeking guidance of personal purpose begins with the desire to connect with the 'greatest good' both within oneself and society" (pp. 180–181). In

essence, the servant leader serves the community first so that the least priv-ileged are the beneficiaries.

The servant leader who builds on the concept of developing a vision for the institution that grows out of the community culture has an excellent opportunity to serve effectively in a culture of trust. When followers recognize that the leader truly is a servant first and committed to the values of respect, service, and equity, the culture of trust comes naturally. No leader can be successful in an institution unless the followers truly trust the judgment and values of the leader. At the same time, the culture of trust is not a one-way street. The leader must trust the judgment and purpose of the followers. For example, the academic leader must understand the goals of the faculty and how each faculty member contributes to the attainment of those goals. With this knowledge, the academic leader can work with the faculty to develop strategies to attain these goals. Through such interaction, a level of trust evolves on both sides, and the leadership is more committed to the institution's culture.

Through the process of developing a curriculum and recruiting a faculty to carry out the mission of the college, the leader can lay the groundwork for a greater level of diversity in the faculty and administration. A commitment to servant leadership is critical, as there is sometimes a suspicion that the leader has a self-serving agenda that may not be consistent with faculty goals. If the leader is committed to carrying out the concept of servant leadership, the faculty will more readily recognize his or her dedication to promoting positive values that are not self-serving. The end result is a culture of trust.

The evolution of the culture of trust depends on viewing diversity not as an end in itself but as a goal that can be attained by the community. Success in meeting that goal is seen in the development of a learning community that demographically reflects society but philosophically builds on a foundation of the key values of respect, service, and equity leading to a mutual understanding of trust within the learning community. A culture of trust acknowledges that there are differences among cultures, and professionals can have differences of opinion relative to the way issues might be solved. However, a true culture of trust acknowledges these differences and seeks to learn from all cultures.

Conscious Development of Strategies

The fourth key to promoting diversity in academic leadership is a conscious development of the strategies to attain diversity. Throughout the history of higher education, many aggressive efforts have been made to promote diversity within organizations. In many states in the 1980s, universities and boards developed a "grow your own" program that encouraged minorities to pursue doctoral degrees in areas that had the greatest need. The results were mixed. However, the administrative staff at many universities did

become more diverse by identifying minority staff or faculty members, sending them to school, and then hiring them in one of the institutions within the system.

Another way, perhaps more direct, to promote diversity in academic leadership is through aggressive recruitment of experienced people with strong academic qualifications. Search committees must recruit academically qualified individuals to positions of leadership to retain the trust of the faculty and maintain academic credibility, but at times it is essential to look beyond the obvious areas of scholarly preparation to see individuals who are well prepared in their discipline and committed to servant leadership. The most successful efforts occur when the chief academic officer and search committees consciously seek out individuals who break the barrier of race or gender and move them into leadership positions. This involves taking some risk, but if the person's core values are solid and he or she is committed to servant leadership, the risk is not nearly so great. Faculties and search committees must be willing to recognize the importance of administrative experience that is related to the academic mission while critically examining the commitment to scholarship. Members of the faculty are sometimes skeptical when there is no significant evidence of scholarly publications, but a strong administrator who is student oriented, sensitive to faculty, and committed to scholarly pursuits is very valuable. The search must be viewed as an opportunity to take a risk, go beyond the barriers erected by various constituents, and promote diversity in academic leadership by stepping outside the box. Identifying young minority faculty and providing limited administrative opportunities to them, while encouraging them to maintain a commitment to scholarship, will ultimately produce strong candidates for more challenging administrative opportunities. This can happen only if the faculty are willing to take such a risk.

Risk taking could be characterized as the fourth key to successful promotion of young faculty into leadership positions, but in reality it is not risky for the candidate if the senior administrator believes in the individual, is willing to stand by the individual, and at the same time continues to work with the faculty to gain a better understanding of the benefits of gender and ethnic diversity within that leadership role. This has occurred in many colleges, and ultimately these young leaders mature into outstanding department chairs or deans who subsequently move up in their profession. It is not enough to be committed to the moral goal or the organizational need; it is essential to be persistent and to be willing, when appropriate, to take risks.

One of the most discussed efforts to enhance diversity in academic leadership is affirmative action, which has been important to the success of moving minorities into leadership positions. Today it is being attacked, but it merits serious consideration within institutions and within systems and states. Contrary to what Selingo (2003) reports, diversity does benefit the institution. They write, "In a sense diversity is like free speech. Almost

everyone approves of it in the abstract, but its application in concrete situations can produce great controversy" (p. 10). There is truth in that statement; however, if the diverse academic leadership in institutions has focused on core values and servant leadership, the likelihood of controversy is much less. In institutions that I have observed throughout the nation, diversity has not been a negative. It has been positive, and institutions have grown as a result. Students from different cultures living, studying, playing, and growing together learn from one another. If in this diverse community the values of respect, service, and equity are evident, the benefits will be great. Those benefits can best be seen in the campus culture.

Perhaps a better term than *affirmative action* would be *affirmative access,* because one of the strategies that can be used effectively in the promotion of diversity in academic leadership is an expansion of access at all levels to enhance the pool of opportunities that are available to individuals. Whether they are women, African Americans, Asians, Hispanics, Latinos, or others, there is little chance for service in the academic area unless there is a broadened base of access.

The success of affirmative action or affirmative access should not be measured just in terms of numbers of individuals promoted or hired into leadership positions; it also should be measured on the success of the individuals who serve the community. Obviously, numbers are important and cannot be ignored, but if significant numbers are employed and a high percentage are unsuccessful in providing leadership, the principles of affirmative action or affirmative access are undermined. Affirmative action, paired with the concept of servant leadership, can predictably lead to a higher level of success within communities. If those who are committed to the development of a culture of trust and a community of understanding recognize the nature of the constituency in which they serve, they will see that the results of the affirmative action efforts will be recognized as successful. In many instances, it is not the principle of affirmative action that is criticized but the results; therefore, if care is taken by the leadership team to build an understanding of servant leadership while affirmatively seeking minorities to be involved in that team, the response to the leadership will be more positive.

Willingness to Be Accountable

A final factor in the design of a program to promote diversity in academic leadership is to incorporate the concept of accountability. McGee-Cooper (1998) says,

> Why do we monitor rather than mentor people? Why does accountability end up last rather than first in our priorities? Why do we spend less time with those who we expect might "miss the mark" while giving those we expect to succeed our full attention? Is accountability as concerned with a person's

development as with what they produce? . . . If it [a system of accountability] is mutually created up front through the process of establishing servant leadership, a whole new paradigm emerges of what accountability means [p. 84].

The issue of accountability relates not only to the person serving, but also to whether the individuals being served are benefiting from this relationship. Look at those who are served, and see how they are developing. Mentor and encourage them as they develop leadership skills. Then establish some benchmarks to monitor the success of the students and the faculty who are served by the leader. Do the students continually have opportunities to enhance their academic experiences in and out of the classroom? Do members of the faculty have opportunities to continue to grow in their profession and become stronger teachers and stronger and more effective servants to students? Accountability that includes the concept of mentoring and focuses on appropriate outcomes is equally important to understanding the culture, the values, and the culture of trust to create diversity in leadership. The strategies used should focus not only on recruiting minorities into majority institutions but also on recruiting minority and majority leaders who understand and practice the principles of value-oriented servant leadership.

Conclusion

The challenge every college, university, and state higher education coordinating board has is changing demographics. In most states, minorities are becoming majorities, and the importance of gaining an understanding of other cultures becomes much more evident. To promote diversity in academic leadership, we must recognize that the college or university should be a microcosm of the total society, and in this setting we have the greatest opportunity to prepare community leaders to lead the new majorities. If we are successful, they will be modeling the servant leaders on our campuses. They will recognize the importance of a culture of trust and the commitment to service that is evident in servant leaders. Finally, they will use this community model as one that is applicable to the greater community. If we are unsuccessful, controversies will lead to unrest on campuses and in many communities. We must be persistent in focusing on visionary goals that transform and sustain the goals to attain diversity within the academic leadership of our institutions.

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