

Module 2: Discussion

Choose from ONE of the following 4 topics. Please give substantive responses using citations when the wording is taken from another source. Remember to respond to at least 3 of your peer's posts (from any of the topics) by the end of the module. Post early and follow up with the comments.

1. Choose one of the main traits associated with leaders. How can it be developed? Demonstrated to others? Identify some people who have this trait. How does it serve them in their leadership role?

Intelligence is one of the first traits people assume should be a quality of a good leader. While I believe this is true, I don't believe it is the most important trait to possess to be a good leader. Intellect can be developed through training. Whether that training is formal classes as we are taking through our Organizational Leadership courses or professional development courses on leadership. You can also develop intelligence by observing one or more of your mentors. People you see and respect for their leadership skills.

An intelligent leader should be willing to always learn. They should also encourage their team to do the same. When we become complacent in our jobs, we can become less effective in our progress or motivation.

I work for a High School in Carlsbad, California. I have had two amazing Principals in the last 6 years I've been there. They are both extremely intelligent men who started out in education as teachers and coaches. I truly believe they are great as Principals because they were in the shoes of their staff before becoming an Administrator. They know the trials and tribulations our teachers, athletic staff and classified staff are going through since they were in those positions before. This makes them more respectable and I value their decisions more based on their experience.

2. Define/describe emotional intelligence. How big an impact do you think emotional intelligence has on helping people be successful? Give an example of its impact on your life.

3. How would leadership skills (technical, human, and conceptual) be used differently in an online environment than in an "face to face" work environment?

4. What are some examples of situations in which a leader must demonstrate behavioral flexibility?

There has been extensive research on leadership traits since the beginning of the 20th century. In my first OGL course, one of the first questions asked is whether we thought a strong leader was a natural born trait or is it something we can be trained and taught to be. I truly believe the answer is both. Some people do not have the mentors surrounding them to understand what a good leader is. They also could be under that circumstance but choose to rise above what they've experienced in their own life to become great leaders. For others, they need an ASU Online course to give them more direction on how to focus on how to become a strong leader. Either way, I believe we all have the capacity to become excellent leaders in our lives.

I am a leader at home in every way. I manage our schedules, manage our finances, book travel and most recently have been ensuring my kids are keeping on track with their virtual learning as well as including as many extracurriculars as possible while they aren't allowed to play their usual organized sports. I am like this at work but I also know when to stay in my lane. I am a high school finance technician that has been in my position since the school opened. My role at work is not to lead the class even though my instinct is to do so for the student government class I work with/for. In this situation, I stay in my place and step in as a leader when I'm needed or asked to be.

I realize there are many studies out there with varying results but I have to say I appreciate this specific result. It's saying the difference in intelligence between a leader in mid level companies isn't very different than the rest of the team. I would like to believe a strong leader doesn't have to be the smartest, intellectually, person in the room to be effective. I believe they must understand their employees and get everyone focused and motivated to achieve their common goal. There are more interpersonal skills related to this type of task rather than a high IQ.

Self-confidence is so meaningful in my current position. I handle finances for a high school. I am constantly meeting with our administrators, teachers, students and members of our community when it comes to anything financial with our school. I have gone to numerous professional development courses and have stayed up-to-date on current policies and education codes to ensure I have the confidence to provide the best services possible for my organization. When I go into meetings, I prepare myself and feel very confident in the answers I will give or the presentation I am giving. I know the people on the other side of the table sees I am confident in my word which in turn makes them feel better about the topic at hand.

Integrity means so much in my line of work. I handle finances for a public school. I am in charge of knowing education codes, policies, balances of all of my accounts, setting up purchase orders and enforcing all of the expectations for our staff. I was always told by my first principal that ASB (Associated Student Body) finances are the number one reason why principals lost their jobs. I always followed up with "But no pressure, right?" I am known to have integrity and to be honest, to the fault, with anyone I come in contact with. I believe being consistent with this is why people are confident in me and trust me. Even when I don't know the answer, I will say I don't know right off the bat. People are more receptive to honest answers rather than dancing around with excuses. I believe integrity is a very integral leadership trait to possess.

Social judgement skills is one of the most important traits to possess for a good leader. I do not believe pure intelligence is all that matters. I think it contributes enormously but it's not what completely connects a leader to their team. I had a principal, my boss, who knew me so well, he could walk by my office, ask me how I was or look at my face, and completely know there was something wrong. He would often close the door, pull up a chair and ask me what the matter was. That is having excellent, dialed in social judgment skills. I respected him so much for knowing my cues so well. I didn't want to complain about work conflict to my boss so I would internalize. He wouldn't allow me to do so. He valued me so much as an employee that he made it a goal of his to connect to most of his staff in this way. To this day, he is my greatest professional mentor and boss I have ever had.

One might assume knowledge was the same thing as intelligence. According to this excerpt, it is vastly different. Knowledge assists leaders to work out problems in an organization. I've had bosses, who would "rather not know" when it comes to conflict. KNowing what's going on in their organization and organizing the data would help them ensure the common goal of the organization is met.

Some leaders lack social good. They are simply in leadership roles for money, the title or as a stepping stone to move up the chain of command. I good leader will focus on ensuring the organization's best interest is always at the forefront. An excellent leader would want their team to connect and work well together. That takes work from the top, down.