Utilizing Authentic Leadership to Impact Student Success in Gateway College Courses: Theory to Practice

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Fast Facts on Ivy Tech Community College

▶ Founded in 1963, we are the country's largest singly-accredited community college

▶ Institutionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) & programmatically accredited

▶ 19 campuses across Indiana

▶ 75 Academic programs

▶ Serve 148,000+ students (2022-2023)

▶ Over 6,500+ employees (staff & faculty)

▶ 40% of students are first-generation college students

▶ 25% of student population are students of color

▶ 73% of students attend through financial aid support

(Ivy Tech Community College, 2023)

Fast Facts for ITCC South Bend Campus

▶ Three county service area: St. Joseph, Elkhart & Marshall

▶ 11,000+ students (2022-2023)

▶ 50+ Academic programs

▶ 150 employees (staff & faculty)

▶ Student age range: 16-65+, median age 27

▶ 3 out of 4 students attend part-time

▶ 27% of student population are students of color

▶ 53% female,46.4% male, 0.6% gender fluid, non-conforming/non-binary

Context of the Problem: Student Course Success Rates

Students

- Gateway course success rates dwindling (Koch et al., 2017; Prystowsky et al., 2016)
  - BUSN 101, ENGL 111, MATH 123, PSYC 101
- Decrease in semester-to-semester retention/persistence
- Lack of active learning and engagement in the classroom (Freeman et al., 2014)
- Relevancy

Employees

- Extreme amounts of organizational change (Black, 2014; Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Lewin, 1951)
- Leadership changes: 5 Chancellors in 13 years (SB Campus)
- Recent RIFs (staff & faculty) and right-sizing campus operational capacity, high staff turnover
- Initiative fatigue/burnout (Winfield & Paris, 2022)

Barriers to Solving the Problem

Confounding Faculty Issues

▶ Unwillingness to navigate *more* change (Black, 2014)

  ▶ *Who will be here to support us?*

  ▶ *When will this initiative pass and we'll be onto something else?*

▶ Impacts to academic freedom

▶ Lack of faculty professional development opportunities

▶ Lack of knowledge on current teaching practices and conversations happening in higher education

Crisis of Campus Culture

▶ Minimal psychological safety (Garvin et al., 2008)

▶ *Is it ok to experiment without fear of reprisal?*

▶ *Can I be vulnerable?*

▶ *Can I trust you?*

Utilizing Authentic Leadership to Facilitate the Work

Definition

Authentic leadership is a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly-developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and followers, fostering positive self-development, increased organizational commitment, engagement, meaningfulness, and job satisfaction & performance (Avolio et al., 2004; Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 243).

Theoretical Components (Avolio & Gardner, 2005)

▶ Self-awareness

▶ Relational transparency

▶ Internalized moral perspective

▶ Balanced processing

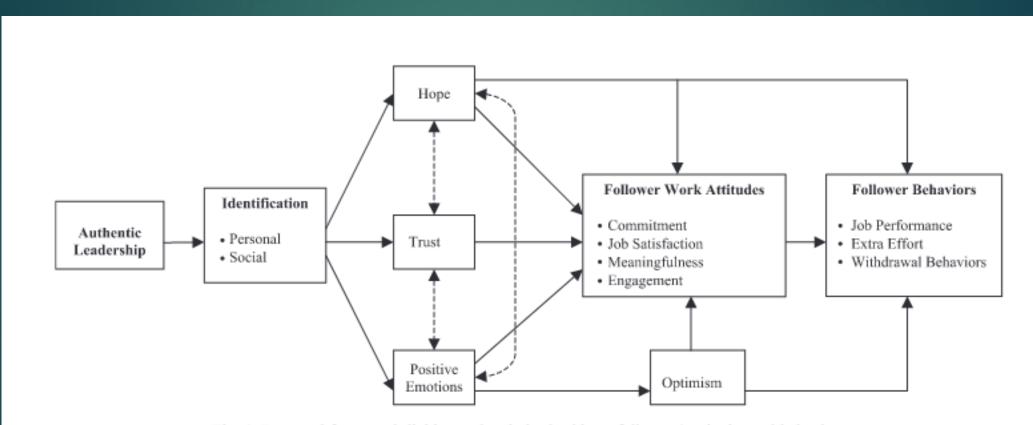# Elements of Authentic Leadership

Avolio et al., 2004

Fig. 1. Proposed framework linking authentic leadership to followers' attitudes and behaviors.

Why Authentic Leadership?

▶ Needed to change the culture (Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Schein, 2017)

▶ Can lead from any position despite role/title- not just the hierarchical role

▶ Vulnerability: we can all learn new things together (growth mindset Dweck, 2008)

▶ Campus need for rebuilding credibility, trust & transparency (Avolio et al., 2004)

▶ *Influencing* colleagues to make the case for change and doing something new (Grenny et al., 2013)

▶ **Use AL to influence, train, and develop faculty in the implementation of effective andragogy, embedding social justice concepts, and improving equitable assessment practices in high-volume gateway courses.**

Elements of Authentic Leadership

Utilizing Authentic Leadership to Facilitate the Work

- Identify our purpose and values (individually/collectively)
- Exercising compassion, self-discipline
- Embracing relationships intentionally
- Commitment to growth mindset and learning (Senge, 2006)

- Helping people find meaning and connection at work through greater self-awareness
- Restoring and building optimism, confidence, and hope
- Promoting transparent relationships and decision-making that builds trust and commitment among colleagues
- Fostering inclusive structures and positive ethical climates (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Price, 2020)

How We Got it Done: Using Influence in Authentic Leadership

▶ Core group of 16 faculty- early adopters (Spring & Summer workshops)
  ▶ Did the work, saw the value across the curriculum
  ▶ Organic conversations among colleagues
    ▶ *Relationships!*
  ▶ Core group expanded discussion during faculty meetings, school/department meetings
  ▶ Shared the research, shared the learning and proposed changes
  ▶ More people interested in the work and the change it might initiate (Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Lewin, 1951)
  ▶ Sharing the data

The Psychology of Informed Ownership

Spring & Summer 2022 (3 sessions Spring, 4 sessions Summer)

▶ Reviewed current state data– we had to do better! (Black, 2014)

▶ Faculty learned together: Best practices, relevant research, from each other (Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, 2023; Koch et al., 2017; Mezirow, 2018; Senge, 2006)

▶ Interrogated our own courses and assignments- and each others' (Mezirow, 2018)

▶ Reviewed high-impact practices (American Association of Colleges & Universities, 2023; Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, 2023; Kuh, 2008)

　　▶ Capstone projects, collaborative assignments, ePortfolios, service learning, undergrad research)

Elements of Informed Ownership

▶ Learned about differences between andragogy vs. pedagogy (Knowles et al., 2015)

▶ Authentic, equitable assessment of student learning (Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, 2023)

▶ Learned how to increase relevancy of course content by integrating social justice topics:

  ▶ Racial injustice, pay inequality, hunger and food insecurity, poverty, gentrification, human rights, policing and racial profiling, climate change

▶ Course review & redesign

  ▶ Assignments or full course

  ▶ Use of ISAE Rubric- Inter-rater agreement

  ▶ CLNA CBE Binders

Direct Impact Data: Targeted BUSN 101, ENGL 111, MATH 123, PSYC 101

Gateway Course	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	Fall 2023 (1st 8 weeks)
BUSN 101	83.17%	80.25%	87.83%	76.83%	83.93%	95%	100%	100%
MATH 123	53.06%	56.52%	48.54%	58.57%	68.52%	71.42%	75.65%	77.29%
ENGL 111	78.32%	78.98%	73.19%	79.79%	79.87%	80.27%	81.14%	80.54%
PSYC 101	76.39%	84.44%	69.91%	67.86%	73.48%	78.43%	82.68%	85.47%

Indirect Impact Data

▶ Stronger team culture (Schein, 2017)

▶ Better relationships & communication (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009)

▶ Leadership development (Luthans & Avolio, 2003)

▶ Empowerment (Avolio et al., 2004)

▶ Increased levels of trust & engagement (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009)

▶ Improvement in organizational learning/knowledge through professional development(Knowles et al., 2015; Mezirow, 2018; Senge, 2006)

Training Workshop Steps

1. Review KPIs and establish benchmarks by Program and Course
2. Review Achieving the Dream Gateway Course Success Data
3. Review Higher Learning Commission Keynote Speaker Video (Equity)
4. Training Sessions on Authentic Andragogy and Assessment Process

Training Topics include….

- ▶ Designing a High Impact Courses
- ▶ Creating Safe Learning Spaces
- ▶ Use of Classroom Assessment Techniques (Active Learning Strategies)
- ▶ Facilitate Higher Order Thinking (Metacognition, Growth Mindset, & Bloom's)
- ▶ Assessing to Inform Instruction and Enhance Teaching and Learning

5. Peer Review of Course Design and Signature Assignment Using ISAE Rubric
6. Contextualize CTE Course(s) and Redesign of Signature Assignment

Takeaways/Call to Action

- **Authentic leadership has a positive impact on organizational change and performance.**

- **Vulnerable individuals- Equity in Assessment**

- **Trust, transparency, and relationships! (Avolio et al., 2004)**

- **Professional development and safe spaces for discussion should be provided.**

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