Innovative Utilization of Leadership Fables in Interprofessional Education

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Purpose

The purpose of this innovative interprofessional educational teaching strategy is to provide an opportunity for students in different professions to reflect upon generic situational leadership issues and to discuss the application of leadership skills and behaviors from an interprofessional lens.

Objectives

1. To describe the benefits of using a leadership fable to engage interprofessional students in leadership content
2. To describe how to select and incorporate a leadership fable into an interprofessional leadership activity.

Background

Fables offer many benefits to the interprofessional student in the leadership classroom. The reading assignment allows the student to immerse themselves into the leadership situation upon which the fable focuses and subsequently, allows the student to clearly evaluate the big picture that is described in the fable, which can often be overlooked when the learner is directly involved in the situation. The reading assignments should be followed by active learning assignments so that students can apply and strengthen leadership concepts and skills. Allowing students to explore leadership through an interprofessional lens allows for an expanded leadership skill set to be developed.

Benefits of Interprofessional Reflective Learning Activities

1. Promote leadership theory application using interdisciplinary viewpoints.
2. Provide a link to real world interdisciplinary practice
3. Stimulate critical analysis and discussion among students in different professions.
4. Provide a method to engage students in the interdisciplinary application of leadership concepts

(Billings & Halstead, 2012)

Selected Leadership Fables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Leadership Concept</th>
<th>Leadership Lesson</th>
<th>IPEC Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lundin, Paul, &amp; Christensen; 1995</td>
<td>Fish!</td>
<td>Employee retention and burnout</td>
<td>Energizing and transforming employees</td>
<td>Competency 3: Interprofessional Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson; 1995</td>
<td>Who Moved My Cheese?</td>
<td>Unexpected change</td>
<td>Participating in change effectively</td>
<td>Competency 3: Interprofessional Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lencioni; 2002</td>
<td>The Five Dysfunctions of a team</td>
<td>Dysfunctional teamwork</td>
<td>Why teams struggle and how to overcome it</td>
<td>Competency 4: Teams and Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lencioni; 2004</td>
<td>Death by Meeting</td>
<td>Ineffective meetings</td>
<td>Transforming meetings into productive, compelling and energizing meetings</td>
<td>Competency 3: Interprofessional Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kotter; 2005</td>
<td>Our Iceberg is Melting</td>
<td>Resistance to change</td>
<td>Process of successful change</td>
<td>Competency 3: Interprofessional Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blanchard and Britt; 2009</td>
<td>Who Killed Change?</td>
<td>Change initiatives that die</td>
<td>Becoming an effective change agent</td>
<td>Competency 3: Interprofessional Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govindajaran &amp; Trimble; 2013</td>
<td>How Stella Saved the Farm</td>
<td>Leadership Challenge: troubled business plan</td>
<td>Implementation of innovative ideas, team building</td>
<td>Competency 4: Teams and Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lencioni; 2016</td>
<td>The Ideal Team Player</td>
<td>Lack of team cohesion</td>
<td>Fostering a strong teamwork environment</td>
<td>Competency 4: Teams and Teamwork</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group Discussion Questions

1. What essential leadership behaviors and skills were present? or Absent?
2. How would your profession address this leadership situation?
3. What additional insight could another profession add to increase your understanding of the issue?
4. If you could rewrite the fable, how could the characters work together better to achieve the desired outcome?
5. What unique viewpoint does your profession bring to how the leadership issue is viewed?

Future Directions

1. Explore the use of other leadership fables to illustrate salient points.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of the interprofessional teaching and learning strategy versus use of the strategy with students of the same profession.
3. Explore the usefulness of interprofessional students creating their own leadership fables to illustrate assigned leadership concepts, behaviors and skills.