

# Innovative Utilization of Leadership Fables in Interprofessional Education

Lynn Stover Nichols, PhD, RN, BC, SANE

Associate Professor, and Interim Assistant Dean for Undergraduate and Prelicensure Programs

Curry J. Bordelon, DNP, NNP-BC, CPNP-AC, MBA

Assistant Professor

University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing

## 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

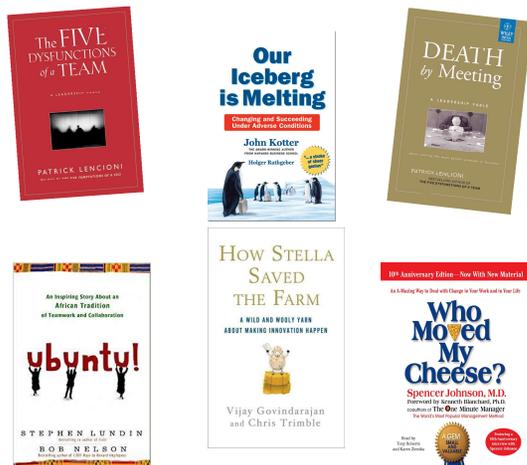
Author/Year	Title	Leadership Concept	Leadership Lesson	IPEC Competency
Lundin, Paul, & Christensen; 1995	Fish!	Employee retention and burnout	Energizing and transforming employees	Competency 3: Interprofessional Communication
Johnson; 1995	Who Moved My Cheese?	Unexpected change	Participating in change effectively	Competency 3: Interprofessional Communication
Lencioni; 2002	The Five Dysfunctions of a Team	Dysfunctional teamwork	Why teams struggle and how to overcome it	Competency 4: Teams and Teamwork
Lencioni; 2004	Death by Meeting	Ineffective meetings	Transforming meetings into productive, compelling and energizing meetings	Competency 3: Interprofessional Communication
Kotter; 2005	Our Iceberg is Melting	Resistance to change	Process of successful change	Competency 3: Interprofessional Communication
Blanchard and Britt; 2009	Who Killed Change?	Change initiatives that die	Becoming an effective change agent	Competency 3: Interprofessional Communication
Lundin and Nelson; 2010	Ubuntu!	Teamwork and Collaboration	Developing a culture of respect and collaboration	Competency 1: Values/Ethics
Lencioni; 2012	The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business	Lack of organizational health	Achievement of organizational health	Competency 2: Roles and Responsibilities
Govindarajan & Trimble; 2013	How Stella Saved the Farm	Leadership Challenge: troubled business plan	Implementation of innovative ideas, team building	Competency 4: Teams and Teamwork
Lencioni; 2016	The Ideal Team Player	Lack of team cohesion	Fostering a strong teamwork environment	Competency 4: Teams and Teamwork

## 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?
- 3.If you could rewrite the fable, how could the characters work together better to achieve the desired outcome?
4. 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.



**UAB** SCHOOL OF NURSING

Knowledge that will change your world