

YOUR LEADER IDENTITY

Center for Organizational Leadership Lab

Leader Identity Team

QUICK SURVEY

1. How would you define leadership?
2. Are you a leader?
3. If no, do you believe you have the potential to become a leader?

HAVE YOU ENGAGED IN ANY OF THESE BEHAVIORS?

- ⑩ Given someone directions to get somewhere
- ⑩ Explained how to complete a task to someone
- ⑩ Given advice to a friend
- ⑩ Gone out of your way to do something that did not directly benefit yourself (examples: returning a lost wallet, clothes to a lost & found, sharing notes to a peer that missed a meeting/class)
- ⑩ Motivated someone to do something
- ⑩ Spoken up if someone says something you do not agree with
- ⑩ Volunteered anywhere
- ⑩ Done something for the sole purpose of making someone else happy
- ⑩ Asked how you could cheer somebody up

WHAT IS "LEADER IDENTITY"? AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Leader Identity is defined as the extent to which an individual self-defines as a leader and considers the leader role as a central part of who he or she is.

Development of a leader identity is important in the ongoing and continuous development of a leader.

- The more salient and crystallized a leader identity, the more likely that individual is to seek out experiences to enact and develop that aspect of the self (Day, et al., 2009).

IDENTIFY A CRUCIBLE MOMENT

- Think of a past experience you had with a leader or someone in a position of authority or power.
- Was the experience positive or negative?
- How did this experience shape your view of leadership?
- In what ways will this experience impact your future leadership development?

TELL YOUR LEADERSHIP STORY

- Construct a leadership story with you as the central character.
- The story should include some character development (e.g., what stage of life you were in, your mindset at the time, etc.), followed by a description of a specific struggle or significant life event, and concluding with lessons learned and what it means for your future.
- Tell the story! "Once upon a time, a young professional name X..."

TIMELINE MINDSET



Early
Leadership
Exposure
(e.g., role models,
early personal
leadership
“experience”)

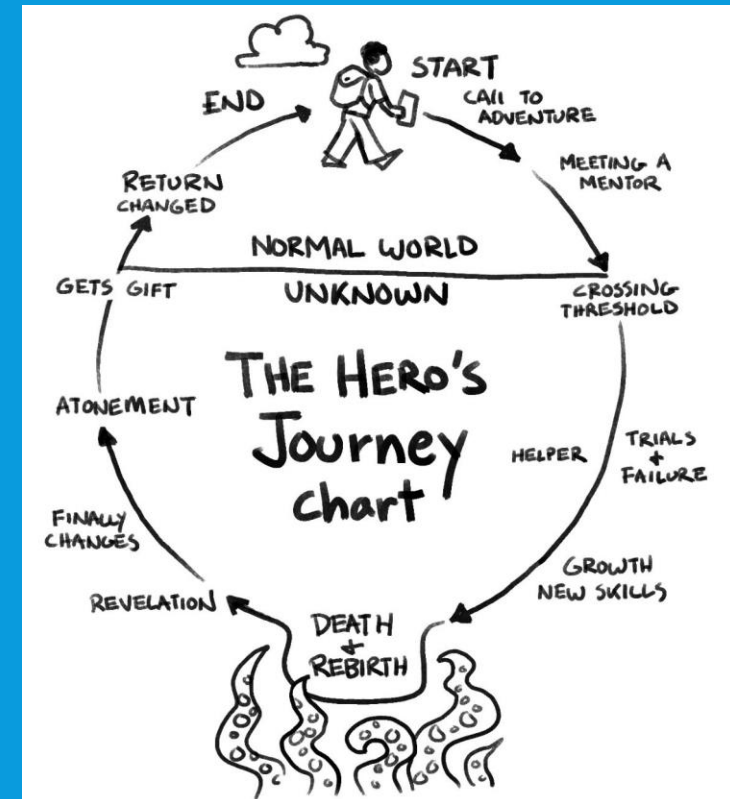
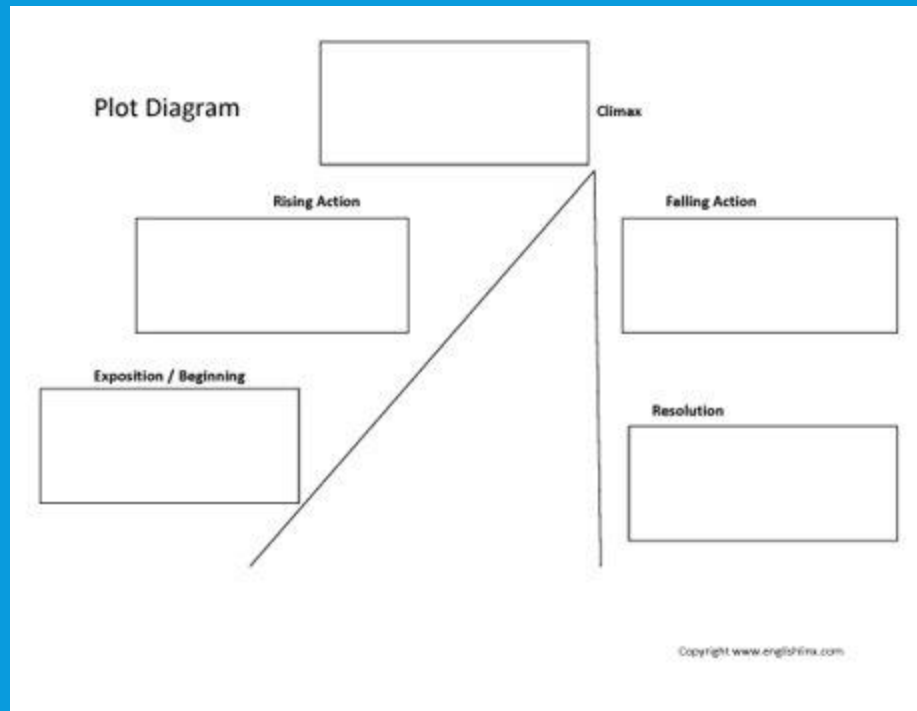
“Crucible”
Moment
(e.g., leading a
team, leaving
home, “adulting”,
job position)

Future
Leadership
Goals

Example 1: (a) captain of the soccer team, (b) enrolling and moving to college independently, (c) putting self “out there” more

Example 2: (a) deciding to take a “gap year” from school for independent development, (b) deciding to go back to college and pursuing my graduate degree, (c) become a consultant and be known as an expert and leader in my field

SAMPLE STORY STRUCTURE



STORY-TELLING AND SENSE-MAKING

- Sensemaking is defined as, “the process of social construction that occurs when discrepant cues interrupt individuals' ongoing activity and involves the retrospective development of plausible meanings that rationalize what people are doing” (Weick, 1995)
- Story-telling is a reflexive element to development (Shamir & Eilam, 2005)
 - Represents and tells “who I was, who I am, and who I might become”
- More than simply remembering events, they are constructed
 - Less to do with facts, emphasis is on meaning

SURVEY

1. Has your view of leadership expanded after discussing your regular initiative?
2. Does leadership seem less intimidating after examining your crucible moment and journey?
3. Will your approach to group projects and activities change after this intervention?
4. Are you a leader?
5. If no, do you believe you have the potential to become a leader?

SO, WHAT NEXT? HOW CAN YOU KEEP THIS FEELING GOING?

Let's try to incorporate more leadership behaviors into our day to day lives by:

- Send a note thanking someone who's changed your life for the better
- Take the lead on a project
- Pick up trash on the street
- Tell a friend you're proud of them
- Leave extra money on the parking meter
- Get a group of friends together for a day of volunteering
- Give a bottle of water to someone who needs it
- Ask someone how their day is going

Leaders care about others, so let's engage in some "random acts of kindness" to show we care!