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DEVELOPING SKILLS OF LEADERSHIP THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING: ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND AND A PATH TO EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

R. Brad Morgan

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DEVELOPING SKILLS OF LEADERSHIP THROUGH
SERVICE LEARNING: ALICE’S ADVENTURES IN
WONDERLAND AND A PATH TO EFFECTIVE
LEADERSHIP*

R. BRAD MORGAN**

“What could a children’s book have to say about leadership?” you may be thinking, “much less leadership in the legal profession?” Well, to that question I defer to one of the book’s primary antagonists, the Duchess, and her simple, reassuring words:

“Tut, tut, child!” said the Duchess. ‘Everything’s got a moral, if only you can find it.’”¹

And with that introduction, dear friends, I invite you to join me as we go down the rabbit hole . . .

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* See LEWIS CARROLL, ALICE’S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND 45 (Richard Kelly ed., Broadview Literary Texts 2000) (1865). This book is commonly shortened to *Alice in Wonderland*. It is an 1865 novel written by English author Charles Lutwidge Dodgson under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll. The plot concerns a young girl named Alice who falls down a rabbit hole into a fantasy world inhabited by peculiar, anthropomorphic creatures. The book explores themes of logic, morals, and worldviews, giving the story popularity with adults as well as with children. Many authorities consider this work to be one of the best examples of the literary nonsense genre. Its narrative course, structure, characters, and imagery have influenced other literary works, and frequent pop culture references, in addition to bar journal articles, cite to this work.

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1. CARROLL, *supra* note *, at 122 (footnote omitted).

INTRODUCTION: TRAVELING THROUGH WONDERLAND

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where—" said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

"— so long as I get *somewhere*," Alice added as an explanation.

"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if you only walk long enough."²

We may be tempted to think that if we, as lawyers, "walk long enough," we are eventually going to become leaders. After all, to those in the legal profession, it is not surprising that the "profession has supplied the majority of American presidents," nor is it surprising that "lawyers are well-represented [in myriad leadership roles including Congress,] governors, state legislators, judges, general counsel, law firm managing partners, [CEOs, heads of public interest organizations], and the entertainment industry."³ Also not surprising to those involved in the legal profession is that "rarely have these lawyers received training for leadership responsibilities."⁴ However, and perhaps somewhat surprisingly, in the preceding decade, more bar associations—and yes, even some law schools—have begun to implement or sponsor some form of "leadership training" for lawyers and law students.⁵ Such programming takes numerous forms, with varying durations, topics addressed, and degrees of regularity and accessibility.

At this point we may be tempted to step back and say "good for us, legal profession, we are [finally] preparing lawyers and law students to assume the mantle of leadership that awaits them." But programming alone—no matter how robust, broadly adopted, or accessible—cannot adequately prepare lawyers or law students to be effective leaders. We cannot simply "walk long enough" and expect to see effective leaders and leadership at the end of the hike. Accepting for the moment that we care about preparing lawyers and law students to become effective leaders, there is, at least, one critical question we must ask with respect to leadership education: why? An

2. *Id.*

3. DEBORAH L. RHODE, *LAWYERS AS LEADERS* 1 (2013). John Cleese, Ben Stein, and puzzle master Will Shortz—among many others—all have law degrees.

4. *Id.*

5. Susan Sturm, *Law Schools, Leadership, and Change*, 127 HARV. L. REV. F. 49 (2013).

admonition from the Harvard Business Review reminds us that “[f]or those who have an open mind for new ideas, who seek to create long-lasting success and who believe that your success requires the aid of others, I offer you a challenge. From now on, start with Why.”⁶ As author Robert Quinn points out:

Clarifying the result we want to create requires us to reorganize our lives. Instead of moving away from a problem, we move toward a possibility that does not yet exist. We become more proactive, intentional, optimistic, invested, and persistent. We also tend to become more energized, and our impact on others becomes energizing.⁷

Or, as the Cat would say, “[W]e must know where we want to get to.”⁸

Although there are many possible answers to “why” in the context of leadership education, the discussion here will focus on why leadership education is essential for law schools, why developing leadership behaviors and skills in law students is important, and why service learning is important to consider in the context of leadership education. Finally, the development of leadership behavior and skills will be addressed in the context of an example of one course that is offered at the University of Tennessee.

I. IS LAW SCHOOL THE PROPER PLACE FOR LEADERSHIP EDUCATION?

“I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I’m not the same, the next question is, Who in the world am I? Ah, that’s the great puzzle!”—Alice⁹

As the profession, legal needs, legal delivery models, and the world in general evolve and often grow more complex, the reasons necessitating true leadership are also likely to evolve.¹⁰ Therefore, it

6. SIMON SINEK, *START WITH WHY: HOW GREAT LEADERS INSPIRE EVERYONE TO TAKE ACTION* 7 (2011).

7. Robert E. Quinn, *Moments of Greatness: Entering the Fundamental State of Leadership*, HARV. BUS. REV. July 2005, at 75, 80.

8. CARROLL, *supra* note *, at 100.

9. *Id.* at 60 (Alice speaking).

10. Deborah L. Rhode, *Teaching Leadership, in BUILDING ON BEST PRACTICES: TRANSFORMING LEGAL EDUCATION IN A CHANGING WORLD* 298 (Deborah Maranville, Lisa Radtke Bliss, Carolyn Wilkes Kaas & Antoinette Sedillo Lopez eds., 2015); see Cathy H. Hamilton & Adrian J. Wurr, *Leadership Development in Service-Learning: An Exploratory Investigation*, 16 J. HIGHER EDUC. OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT 213, 216 (2012).

may be an insurmountable task to truly enumerate all of the reasons that leadership education is important. Suffice it to say that there are multiple reasons that leadership education in law schools is important; this article touches on only a few. Like Alice's question, it seems that the inquiry here would benefit from examining who we are as lawyers and leaders.

First, and as demonstrated above, there can be no question that lawyers often occupy positions of authority, and have the opportunity to serve as leaders. Lawyers serve as "state legislators, judges, prosecutors, general counsel, law firm managing partners," heads of government agencies, and public defenders.¹¹ Members of the legal profession provide day-to-day leadership for their churches, other social and charitable groups, campaigns, committees, and countless other groups and organizations.¹² Would it not be wise to prepare our students—and ourselves—for such roles?

Second, more and more law firm competency models include leadership skills such as "communication, . . . teamwork, client development and service"¹³ In other words, many of our students will be evaluated professionally based upon their demonstration of leadership skills.

Third, many of the skills that are thought of as "lawyer" attributes and skills are also "leadership" skills. For example, "seven of the ten of McCrate report skills (problem solving, communication, factual investigation, counseling, negotiation, organization, management of legal work, and recognizing and resolving ethical dilemmas) can be viewed as leadership skills used in legal contexts."¹⁴ Moreover, many of the attributes and responsibilities provided for in the profession's canon of ethics are mirrored as those attributes and responsibilities that effective leaders possess and demonstrate. For example, the lawyerly attributes of candor and truthfulness are consistent with the leadership attributes of integrity and honesty.¹⁵

Fourth, looking to the future, "[s]ustainable competitive advantage depends on having people that know how to build relationships, seek information, make sense of observations and

11. Rhode, *supra* note 10, at 297; Hamilton & Wurr, *supra* note 10, at 216.

12. Hamilton & Wurr, *supra* note 10, at 216.

13. Donald J. Polden, *Leadership Matters: Lawyers' Leadership Skills and Competence*, 52 SANTA CLARA L. REV. 899, 913 (2012).

14. Leary Davis, *Competence as Situationally Appropriate Conduct: An Overarching Concept for Lawyering, Leadership, and Professionalism*, 52 SANTA CLARA L. REV. 725, 742 (2012).

15. Rhode, *supra* note 10, at 298.

share ideas through an intelligent use of new technologies.”¹⁶ In other words, sustainable competitive advantage depends upon having effective leaders in an organization.

And finally—and perhaps of most import for purposes of leadership education in law schools—leadership can be taught and learned.¹⁷ As stated by Professor Rhode “most leadership skills are acquired, not genetically based, and decades of experience with leadership development indicate that its major capabilities can be learned.”¹⁸ Despite the recognition that leadership can be taught and learned

[t]raditionally, leadership development has been missing or marginal in law school curricula, and what faculty teach has been profoundly disconnected from what leaders need. Legal education prides itself on preparing students to “think like lawyers.” To that end, it focuses attention on analytic reasoning, substantive knowledge, and research and writing skills. Yet these capabilities account for little of what makes for effective leadership.¹⁹ Empirical research finds that leaders’ most essential qualities largely cluster in five categories: values (such as integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, and an ethic of service); personal skills (such as self-awareness, self-control, and self-direction); interpersonal skills (such as social awareness, empathy, persuasion, and conflict management); vision (such as forward looking and inspirational); [and] technical competence (such as knowledge, preparation, and judgment).²⁰

Alarming, Professor Rhode notes that

[n]ot only are these qualities neglected in legal education, many of them are not characteristic of individuals who choose law as a career. Several decades of research find that attorneys’ distinctive personality traits can pose challenges for lawyers as leaders, particularly when they are leading other lawyers.²¹

16. Harold Jarche & Kenneth Mikkelsen, *The Best Leaders are Constant Learners*, HARV. BUS. REV., Oct. 16, 2015, <https://hbr.org/2015/10/the-best-leaders-are-constant-learners>.

17. Polden, *supra* note 13, at 903.

18. RHODE, *supra* note 3, at 25.

19. Rhode, *supra* note 10, at 298.

20. *Id.*

21. *Id.*

For example, Dr. Larry Richard has found that attorneys traditionally score high on personality traits such as skepticism and autonomy and low on traits like sociability.²² Additionally, attorneys rank high in "competitiveness, 'urgency,' and achievement orientation."²³ "Skepticism . . . can get in the way of inspiration [and] vision."²⁴ "'Urgency' . . . can lead to impatience and inadequate listening."²⁵ "Competitiveness and desires for [personal] achievement can make lawyers overly self-absorbed, controlling, combative, and difficult to [work with]."²⁶

In sum, lawyers often assume positions of authority and opportunities to exhibit effective leadership, and are often evaluated on their performance in the same. Though law schools have not historically provided leadership training, this is perhaps a missed opportunity especially in light of lawyers' natural inclinations to exhibit traits and attributes that are more consistent with management of work than leadership of people and organizations. Therefore, perhaps the opportunity to be more intentional in providing leadership education in law schools has not truly been missed, but has merely arrived. Accepting for a moment that such is the case, where might such educational efforts focus?

II. THEORY AND SKILLS: BECOMING THROUGH ACTION

"I could tell you my adventures—beginning from this morning," said Alice a little timidly: "but it's no use going back to yesterday, because I was a different person then."²⁷

At the outset, it should be noted that there is no clear profile of an ideal leader.²⁸ There is, however, some degree of consensus when it comes to skills and behaviors that effective leaders exhibit. For example, Professor Rhode notes that effective leaders generally exhibit skills in the arenas of self-awareness, integrity, investigation, drafting, oral advocacy, effective communication, work control and direction, social awareness, empathy, conflict management, vision, and technical competence.²⁹ Dean Leary Davis

22. Larry R. Richard, *Herding Cats: The Lawyer Personality Revealed*, REP. LEGAL. MGMT., Aug. 4, 2002, at 4, 9.

23. Rhode, *supra* note 10, at 298.

24. *Id.*

25. *Id.*

26. *Id.* at 298-99.

27. CARROLL, *supra* note *, at 136.

28. RHODE, *supra* note 3, at 8.

29. *Id.* at 3, 4.

states that to be effective, a leader must engage in self-management while attending to tasks embedded in the situation and relationship with others.³⁰ It has also been stated that high performing associates demonstrate leadership skills of openness to solving problems and actively seek solutions.³¹ These associates also demonstrate effort and ownership to reach challenging goals that they see as important, and approach working with others in terms of teamwork, networking, and influence.³²

It is clear from the foregoing that leadership, although perhaps not amenable to a precise definition, is discernable chiefly through demonstration of the skills and attributes ascribed to effective leaders; in other words, although we may not be able to define leadership, we know it when we see it.³³ And how do we see it? Through visible demonstration of leadership skills. In fact, it has been noted that “[m]ore and more firms are using competency models based on observed behaviors, rather than perceived qualities, to develop and reward talent.”³⁴

As described by the Center for Creative Leadership, “[t]he most frequent conceptualization is that leader development is about the development of the leader’s skills and abilities.”³⁵ Additionally, some of the most effective and accepted leader development programming approaches the educational experience through “skilled performance of leadership behaviors.”³⁶ “This approach involves learning about the components of a skill (such as strategic visioning or communication) through descriptions, examples, and discussion, and then practicing that skill with feedback. Skill building is the most commonly employed approach to leader development and is used most frequently at supervisory and mid-management levels.”³⁷

This discussion reveals that demonstrating leadership skills is an important aspect of consideration in leadership education. Intentionality with respect to curricula and learning tools that allow for the exploration of leadership skills, putting leadership skills into practice, and reflecting upon and honing leadership skills may thus

30. Davis, *supra* note 14, at 771.

31. Lori Berman et al., *Developing Attorneys for the Future*, 52 SANTA CLARA L. REV. 875, 896 (2012).

32. *Id.*

33. See *Jacobellis v. Ohio*, 378 U.S. 184, 197 (1964) (Stewart, J., concurring).

34. Davis, *supra* note 14, at 728.

35. Cynthia D. McCauley, *Leader Development: A Review of Research*, CENTER FOR CREATIVE LEADERSHIP 1, 8 (2008), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/266495919_Leader_Development_A_Review_of_Research.

36. *Id.* at 27.

37. *Id.* at 27-28.

be warranted. As Alice might say, leadership education should allow students to emerge as different people because their actions demonstrate leadership skills.³⁸

III. SERVICE LEARNING AS A CATALYST FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT

"I think I could, if I only know how to begin." [Thought Alice]. For, you see, so many out-of-the-way things had happened lately, that Alice had begun to think that very few things indeed were really impossible.³⁹

Very few things are really impossible. Of moment here, teaching and learning leadership—and leadership skills—is possible. One mechanism for developing skills across disciplines is through service-learning. This section explores the underpinnings of service learning generally, then as applied to leadership skill development in particular. Finally, one attempt at service-learning to develop skills that is taking place at the University of Tennessee will be discussed.

A. Service Learning and Skills

Accepting for the moment that educational experiences that develop skills are important, it is worthy of our time to consider pedagogical methodologies that are designed for the development of skills. Here we will look at one such mechanism, the problem-based or problem-centered mechanism. "Problem-based education is consistent with pedagogical trends in undergraduate education as well as in professional education."⁴⁰ In the problem-centered approach, the curriculum is organized around problems, and students are active learners who are working to solve real life problems.⁴¹ This approach "helps students understand what they are learning, provides anchor points so they can recall what they learn, and shows them how to transfer what they learn in the classroom to lawyers' tasks in practice."⁴²

38. See Rhode, *supra* note 10, at 298.

39. CARROLL, *supra* note *, at 15.

40. ROY STUCKEY ET AL., BEST PRACTICES FOR LEGAL EDUCATION 106 (2007).

41. *Id.* at 110.

42. Deborah Maranville, *Infusing Passion and Context into the Traditional Law Curriculum Through Experiential Learning*, 51 J. LEGAL EDUC. 51, 54 (2001). This idea also correlates well with research and data that demonstrate that lawyers that have purpose in their work experience higher levels of objective and subjective well-being, which in turn leads to greater efficacy in their professional lives and more

This problem-centered approach is important for at least three reasons. First, students are more interested in learning when their studies and efforts take place in a context they care about.⁴³ Second, when students are given context, there is a greater likelihood that the students will internalize and recall the information learned.⁴⁴ Third, information learned in the context of test preparation is organized, stored, and retrieved very differently than information organized, stored, and retrieved for practical application; think “rote memorization” as compared to “muscle memory.”⁴⁵ Of additional and significant importance, students need to recognize the depth, breadth, and complexities associated with clients’ legal issues. Educational experiences that allow students to explore these realities in role increase the students’ ability to serve their clients effectively, efficiently, and ethically.⁴⁶

One form of problem-based education is known as “service learning.” “[T]he Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching acknowledged legal clinics as the primary ‘third apprenticeship’ of legal education—the place where knowledge, skills, and the social-ethical dimensions of lawyering come together to help students bridge the gap from law school to practice.”⁴⁷ Service learning “integrates hands on social action, volunteerism, and learning objectives into a third apprenticeship model that resembles, but is not identical to, clinical legal education.”⁴⁸ Characteristics of service-learning include an emphasis on its reciprocal nature; i.e., giving to individuals, organizations, community, and reaping benefits of enhanced knowledge, skills, and critical reflection.⁴⁹

Some perceived benefits of service learning include increased retention of knowledge and skills, “increase[d] relevancy of education

subjective fulfillment in their professional and personal lives. Paula M. Davis-Laack, *Rethinking Lawyer Motivation and Well-Being*, WISCONSIN LAWYER (March 2015), <http://www.wisbar.org/newspublications/wisconsinlawyer/pages/article.aspx?Volume=88&Issue=3&ArticleID=23937> (citing Lawrence S. Krieger & Kennon M. Sheldon, *What Makes Lawyers Happy?*, 83 GEO. WASH. L. REV. 554 (2014)).

43. STUCKEY ET AL, *supra* note 40, at 93 (citing Maranville, *Infusing Passion*, *supra* note 42, at 73).

44. STUCKEY ET AL, *supra* note 40, at 93.

45. *Id.*

46. *Id.*

47. Laurie Morin & Susan Waysdorf, *The Service-Learning Model in the Law School Curriculum*, 56 N.Y.L. SCH. L. REV. 561, 562 (2011-12) (citing WILLIAM M. SULLIVAN ET AL., *Summary*, in EDUCATING LAWYERS 9 (2007)).

48. Morin & Waysdorf, *supra* note 47, at 565.

49. Mary Pat Treuhart, *Weaving a Tapestry: Providing Context through Service-Learning*, 38 GONZ. L. REV. 215, 220-21 (2002-03).

to students 'living in a real world,' enhance[d] personalized education for students, [and it] teaches positive values, leadership, citizenship and personal responsibility; empowers students as learners, teachers, achievers and leaders; invites students to become members of their own community; [and] teaches job skills."⁵⁰ "When people are actively engaged in helping change the world and improving peoples' lives, they are more open to embracing the analytical and doctrinal context of their actions."⁵¹ "By combining service objectives and learning objectives, both the recipient and the provider of the service measurably evolve and change resulting in a radically effective and transformative method of teaching."⁵²

As described more fully below, service learning can be a particularly powerful mechanism in the context of leadership education, particularly in the arena of skills development.

B. Service Learning and Leadership Skills

"Service is a powerful vehicle for developing students' leadership skills."⁵³ In fact, "[a] growing number of studies point to the efficacy of promoting leadership development through service-learning projects."⁵⁴ For example, "enhanced leadership skills are associated with participation in volunteer work, tutoring other students, and working on group projects with other students."⁵⁵ "[O]n a subtle level, community service learning projects open avenues for the development and refinement of leadership skills in individuals . . .," but greater efficacy occurs when a "course moves development of leadership skills from the subtle into the deliberate."⁵⁶

More specifically, when intentionality drives the creation of "space for students to develop leadership skills within service-learning courses[.]" not only do students render valuable service,

50. *Id.* at 221.

51. Morin & Waysdorf, *supra* note 47, at 590.

52. *Id.*

53. Jennifer Althaus, *Service-Learning and Leadership Development: Posing Questions Not Answers*, 4 MICHIGAN J. OF SERVICE LEARNING 122, 122 (1997) (quoting HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE, A SOCIAL CHANGE MODEL OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT 10 (Version 3) (1996)).

54. Hamilton & Wurr, *supra* note 10, at 216.

55. Althaus, *supra* note 53, at 124 (quoting HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE, A SOCIAL CHANGE MODEL OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT 12 (Version 3) (1996)).

56. Althaus, *supra* note 53, at 123 (quoting Pater W. Dillon & Robyn Van Riper, *Students Teaching Students: A Model for Service and Study*, HIGHER EDUCATION 48, 49 (1993)).

"but [this model] also provides substantive opportunities for the students to shape the nature of the service-learning project."⁵⁷ "Thus, service-learning projects are uniquely positioned to foster leadership skills because they encourage students to become co-producers of knowledge."⁵⁸

One suggested reason for the efficacy of servicing learning as a tool for leadership skill development relates to traditional views of leadership as compared to transformational views of leadership.⁵⁹ For example, some "subscribe to traditional 'transactional' leadership models, which emphasize leader-centric views of leadership (e.g., leadership is vested in a position or a single leader), rather than more complex leadership models that favor collaborative, values-centered transformational approaches."⁶⁰ Under traditional leadership model views,

students are [frequently] assigned to do a particular task rather than being allowed to determine each and every step of a service-learning experience, from community assessment, to evaluation, to celebration. Simply assigning [them] tasks in teacher-designed projects denies [the students] the opportunity for decision making and section planning. It limits their understanding of the interconnectedness of tasks [in the context of the desired outcomes] and gives them no sense of the complexity of project management and leadership.⁶¹

In the service learning model, however, leadership is a process, not a position, and the model advocates for the practice of non-hierarchical leadership learned in collaborative settings.⁶²

Service-learning is justified pedagogically with respect to leadership education in at least two ways. First, it is an active learning strategy that some think superior to

57. Hamilton & Wurr, *supra* note 10, at 215 (citing Mark A. Chesler, Jennifer Kellman-Fritz, & Amy Knife-Gould, *Training Peer Facilitators for Community Service Learning Leadership*, 9 MICH. J. COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING LEADERSHIP 59 (2003)).

58. Hamilton & Wurr, *supra* note 10, at 215.

59. *Id.* at 216-17.

60. *Id.* at 216 (citing DAVID D. CHRISLIP, *COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP* (Josey-Bass, Inc. 1994)).

62. Adrian J. Wurr & Cathy H. Hamilton, *Leadership Development in Service-Learning: An Exploratory Investigation*, 16(2) J. OF HIGHER EDUC. OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT 213, 216-17 (2012).

62. Althaus, *supra* note 53, at 124.

simulations because it directly addresses the “problems of greatest human concern” that are ‘messy and confusing and incapable of technical solution.’”⁶³

Thus,

by linking the classroom to the world of praxis, it allows induction to complement deduction, personal discovery to challenge received truths, immediate experience to balance generalizations and abstract theory. Secondly, by marrying the student's self-interest in acquiring skills with the community interest in obtaining needed services, it creates a bridge of knowledge between ‘public work’ and ‘private benefit.’⁶⁴

“In sum, service-learning is a dynamic process, through which students’ personal and social growth is tightly interwoven into their academic and cognitive development.”⁶⁵

Relying at least in part on the foregoing principles of service learning, particularly as applied to leadership skill development, the University of Tennessee College of Law course *Leadership Practicum* is one attempt at a service learning course designed with the intent to develop leadership skills in students.

C. *Leadership Practicum Course*

“A single, one-time course is insufficient to create and support lasting behavioural change.”⁶⁶ That being said, leadership development courses and techniques offered in “[b]usiness schools can serve as important outside resources for the initiative toward leadership in law.”⁶⁷ Moreover, the Carnegie report recommends using formative evaluations and pedagogical tools favored in leadership development.⁶⁸ Therefore, although one course may be

63. Linda F. Smith, *Why Clinical Programs Should Embrace Civic Engagement, Service Learning and Community Based Research*, 10 CLINICAL L. REV. 723, 728 (2003).

64. *Id.* at 729.

65. Morin & Waysdorf, *supra* note 47, at 593.

66. Chris Booth, *Leadership and Management Education: An Analysis of the Executive Education Experiences of an Australian Group of Managers*, 6 INT'L REV. BUS. RES. PAPERS 36, 40 (2010) (quoting Jay A. Conger, *The Brave New World of Leadership Training*, 21 ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS 46, 56 (1993)).

67. Susan S. Daicoff, *Expanding the Lawyer's Toolkit of Skills and Competencies*, 52 SANTA CLARA L. REV. 795, 839 (2012).

68. Davis, *supra* note 15, at 746-47.

insufficient to create and support the continual demonstration of leadership skills, such a course may be instrumental in creating within students burgeoning skills that they can then continue to hone and replicate in other settings. The *Leadership Practicum* is one such course.

Essentially, the course creates opportunities for students to learn about leadership characteristics, attributes, and skills; identify strategies and tactics for the development and demonstration of the same; identify barriers to development of the same and mechanisms for overcoming those barriers; learn about skills to develop and demonstrate awareness of self and others; learn about project-management skills and working collaboratively with others; and to develop and demonstrate leadership skills through a robust service-learning opportunity in small groups.

The class is front-loaded with in-class sessions, followed by flexibility in scheduling to allow students to take ownership of the service projects. During the first few in-class sessions, students are presented with readings from authors both in legal academia, as well as material from sources such as the Harvard Business Review, in order encourage thought and discussion about how leaders *act*. The students create lists, as groups, of what characteristics and actions *effective* leaders demonstrate, and what characteristics and actions *ineffective* leaders demonstrate. These discussions—which are generally robust, with broad student engagement—will typically focus on characteristics and skills of leadership, described above, such as self-awareness, integrity, effective communication, work control, social awareness, empathy, conflict management, vision, and competence.⁶⁹

The classes then turn to discussions of what hurdles exist in general, and in particular for lawyers, when it comes to developing and demonstrating the aforementioned leadership skills. Typically, these conversations, which are based in readings from legal and business authors, will focus on self-absorption, dishonesty, incompetence, and a lack of communication skills; notably, these are attributes that the literature generally identifies as being displayed by ineffective leaders. Rather than leave on a pessimistic note, this session then turns to a discussion of strategies and tactics for overcoming such hurdles.

During the course, the students take the Myers-Briggs personality inventory, which is an exercise based on Peter Drucker's concept that "those who [lead] others need to become experts in

69. RHODE, *supra* note 3, at 3, 4.

[leading] themselves.”⁷⁰ Through this exercise, which is debriefed in class with the assistance of a business school colleague with a Ph.D. in psychology, students are given tools to become more self-aware and more aware of others’ views, as well as how to best interact and work with others in light of personality differences.⁷¹

During this portion of the semester, the in-class sessions also focus on project management and group dynamics.⁷² For many of the law students, these sessions are the first exposure that they have to ideas related to the importance of work planning, efficiency models, and templates for designing projects both large and small. The discussion then turns to why project management may be important for the legal profession, placing a great deal of emphasis placed on the concept of Legal Project Management (“LPM”).⁷³

During the semester prior to *Leadership Practicum*, the course instructors work with public interest entities to identify law related projects that would be appropriate in size and scope for law students to plan, implement, manage, and report on. For example, during one semester the class took on projects assisting the Attorney General’s Office of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (“EBCI”). The students examined and analyzed legislation from diverse sources on issues of importance to the EBCI, as well as the relevant statutory and regulatory frameworks that could impact a regional development district’s desire to implement infrastructure changes on a regional level.

Once appropriate projects are selected and vetted by the course instructors, the students self-select and sign-up for one of the projects. The students thus form their own groups based upon

70. *Id.* at 27 (citing Peter F. Drucker, *Managing Oneself*, 77.2 HARV. BUS. REV. 65, 65 (1999)).

71. This portion of the classroom experience would not be possible without the generous—and incredibly valuable and effective—assistance of Dr. Cheryl Barksdale, Director of Leadership Development Assessments for executive MBA programs and Executive Education at the University of Tennessee Haslam College of Business.

72. The success of the class regarding project management and team dynamics is due in no small part to the efforts and genius of Dr. Mandyam Srinivasan, who holds the Pilot Corporation Chair of Excellence at the University of Tennessee Haslam College of Business.

73. As described on the website of the American Bar Association, “[l]egal project management (LPM) can be an effective approach to enhance planning, budgeting and more efficient delivery of an organization’s legal services. Client demands, competition, and economic pressures now compel law firms to manage at the matter or project level. Improved project management is fast becoming a key component for law firm profitability and growth in client relationships.” *The Power of Legal Project Management*, SHOP.AMERICANBAR.ORG (last visited Apr. 13, 2016).

interest levels, and for the remainder of the semester, they work in small groups on their respective service projects. The students plan a project by communicating with the organizational partners to discuss goals, objectives, desired deliverables, stakeholders, communication milestones, etc.; implement the project by determining who will assume responsibility for what work; manage the project by engaging in the work and working to the plan; and then report back to the stakeholders.

During this portion of the course the instructors meet regularly with the organizational partners as well as the student groups. Through this mechanism appropriate ethical and quality standards are maintained while simultaneously allowing the students to work somewhat autonomously. Toward the end of the semester, classroom sessions resume, with topics focusing on skills of communication of data and information as compared to mere presentation of data and information. These sessions provide the opportunity for students to consider, and then demonstrate effective communication.

At the conclusion of the course, the students present their results to the project partners in a setting similar to a client or board meeting. They then engage in providing evaluations and feedback of themselves and the other students in their project team, such feedback and evaluations representing a significant portion of their final grade.

This course intentionally creates many opportunities for students to learn about and then demonstrate leadership skills. For example, when it comes to leadership skills surrounding the ability to anticipate and plan, a leader should “[t]alk to [his] customers, suppliers, and other partners to understand their challenges.”⁷⁴ Additionally, in order to have vision and be a creative problem solver, a leader should “[f]ocus on the root causes of [an issue] rather than the symptoms,” and “encourage . . . open dialogue.”⁷⁵

In order to develop and demonstrate decisiveness, leaders should work to “[d]etermine who needs to be directly involved” and who can provide what resources and skills.⁷⁶ In order to develop and demonstrate the skill of communication, leaders should “[i]dentify key internal and external stakeholders, map[] their positions,” and communicate regularly.⁷⁷ To further develop communication skills, the students engaged in presenting their result in a manner that

74. Paul J. H. Schoemaker, Steve Krupp, & Samantha Howland, *Strategic Leadership: The Essential Skills*, HARV. BUS. REV. (Jan.-Feb. 2013), <https://hbr.org/2013/01/strategic-leadership-the-essential-skills>.

75. *Id.*

76. *Id.*

77. *Id.*

emphasizes clarity of communication rather than merely presentation of data. By providing evaluations for themselves and their fellow students, they are able to demonstrate leadership skills such as ownership of goals, teamwork, accountability, and providing feedback.⁷⁸ This course is designed to create opportunities for the students to demonstrate these leadership skills—and more—through the service-learning model.

The efficacy of such a course will take some time to determine. In the meantime, however, student feedback is positive with respect to the framework of the course in permitting students to develop leadership skills. For example, some student feedback includes comments such as “I think [this course] helps everyone self-identify what kind of leaders they are, which is the first step[.]” and “working in a group is probably the best scholastic way to develop leadership, as it forces the [students] in the group to step up[.]”⁷⁹ The preliminary feedback appears positive, and the course will continue to be refined as we learn more about what is, and is not, working.

CONCLUSION

“But I don’t want to go among mad people,” Alice remarked.

“Oh, you ca’n’t help that,” said the Cat: “[W]e’re all mad here. I’m mad. You’re mad.”

“How do you know I’m mad?” said Alice.

“You must be,” said the Cat, “or you wouldn’t have come here.”⁸⁰

Lawyers are placed in positions of authority, and have the opportunity to serve as effective leaders; that much is clear. The benefits of preparing future legal professionals to be effective leaders is, at the very least, worthy of serious consideration. Leadership skills can be taught. Leadership skills can be learned. As we engage in evaluating and implementing leadership programming, we—and our students—like Alice, will not go back to where we have been because we will be different people, for the better.

78. Lori Berman & Heather Bock, *Developing Attorneys for the Future: What Can We Learn from the Fast Trackers?*, 52 SANTA CLARA L. REV. 875 (2012).

79. Student e-mails on file with the author.

80. CARROLL, *supra* note *, at 100.