

Reflective journal: leadership and management

[Business](#), [Leadership](#)



The Business Milieu

Skin Solutions is a clinic that offers medical esthetic services to treat various skin imperfections other than providing remedies for skin diseases. It employs 6 licensed medical estheticians and one doctor of dermatology to look after patients who come for consultation and treatment. Facilities include a spa, and three spacious rooms for performing extractions, facials, and treatments for skin nourishment.

To meet the needs and the demand of clients who come to the clinic, investments in the latest technologies for improving and treating skin imperfections have been made. Tools of the trade consisted of state-of-the-art equipment and lasers, and computerized analysis of skin imperfections among others to boast of. This was therefore one of the reasons why customers were satisfied that they always came back to avail of other services and even brought with them a friend or two to promote what the clinic could also do for them.

The skin clinic has always been full of customers that keeping the clinic open from 9am to 8pm was not enough to accommodate all the patients that wanted to be checked in a day. Some patients would have themselves enlisted at the front desk first and then either wait outside the clinic or just check back a few hours after strolling around the mall. Some patients would also call in and make appointments for the following day so they could be sure that they wouldn't have to wait in line when they come for consultation and treatment in the coming day.

I was a medical intern in dermatology when all this was happening. I observed that many attempts to compete with the style and service of the clinic have been made by others to no avail. They often wondered about what business secret was held by the clinic that allows them to click with the public.

My mentor was not only a cousin. She is the clinic's owner and dermatologist; considered a prime mover in modern medical and cosmetic esthetics in our area. She was an inspiration to others in the same field as well as for others who were not into the esthetics business but who were like her, an entrepreneur who had a vision for her enterprise.

What did you learn about yourself: Lessons on maturity?

I somewhat felt anxious and uncomfortable by being a protégé of a cousin. Having a relative for a coach was sometimes embarrassing for we've known each other far deeper than anybody else did in the clinic and so, it was easy for the coach to point out my mistakes and weaknesses. I on the other hand would sometimes be too proud to admit them but knew deep inside that the coach was right and that I had to lower my pride and accept her corrections for it was, after all, for my own good.

What I admire about my cousin was that she would raise the level of our relationship at work to one that is strictly professional. With this, I learned that her goal was always of maturity - of following a purpose and not the personality who runs with that purpose. This valuable character I have learned to accept for myself as I observed her ways in leadership.

In my case, it seemed that I had the tendency to follow a person for their personality as though I were a teenager. This, I felt was a mark of immaturity that had to be changed. But when one sees a personality's purpose and follows that purpose, then he or she is likely to succeed. I realized then that being mature entails adopting marks of maturity, one of which is having a sense of purpose for it is this purpose that causes one to act and move a certain way and make decisions that will lead to success.

What did you learn about yourself: Lessons on Determination

Another key lesson learned was that we don't just have to be in the business. Rather, we should be in the business in such a way that we want to succeed and win. A winning attitude is what makes businesses flourish and sustain competence in a domain where there seems to be many competitors. I have learned to adopt that attitude and be determined to be and do the best, not settling for the mediocre.

What did you learn about yourself: Lessons on Direction

Another message that proved significant to me was a lesson involving direction. One may be determined to be the best in business but this determination is nothing if one does not have a direction for the business. Two things I realized that will set a person's direction in life and business are purpose and focus.

Purpose gives meaning to one's life and trade. For the business to grow, advance, and prosper, purpose is an essential ingredient. Focus on the other hand leads the direction towards a goal. Running aimlessly will amount to nothing. Doing many things for the business without focus will not

accomplish something laudable. But when one has purpose and focus in pursuing dreams, goals, and visions for the business, then a direction is charted, a course is followed, and a heritage is handed down.

What did you learn about yourself: Lessons on Heritage

Learning secrets of the trade is a privilege that ought to be cherished. Those closest to my cousin in the business besides me, were the six medical estheticians who have grown to love their work at the clinic. They have become skilled at customer relations, medical dealings, and the dos and don'ts of the industry. The good thing about our mentor is that she was a constant source of business knowledge. She shares with us a knowledge that is not temporary but one that will last. She expects that this knowledge will bear fruit and help establish businesses in the future that will hold the same philosophies.

Prerequisites of heritage I then realized while receiving training include focus and the heart to communicate one's vision. This vision includes making partisans and training them to become future leaders in their desired trade. The goal was to make replicas of one's self or people who may be better than the mentor. With this, the idea is to focus by fervently believing in the vision and forgetting about things that does not run with this vision of success.

I realized that in order for a heritage to be built, a leader must have conviction and learn to communicate something that he or she lives for, and then her protégé will follow. The second prerequisite was building the right foundation. Mentors are pillars of foundation who are present to support their

charges. The values they treasure are priceless, indispensable and effective. Investing these in trainees will be beneficial for the success of the company.

What did you learn about yourself: Lessons on Discipline

In all these things, I also learned the value of discipline. There's a cost for success. Strict training in all aspects of running the business is important to maintain business and financial health. What we want is to please both our human resources and then of course, our clientele. To achieve this, therefore, is to sacrifice time to learn about proper ethics of the trade, people skills and influence, the latest technology involved, and also learn about the rates for effectiveness of each technology and treatment.

Mastering the treatment strategies, these tools, and providing customers with quality service is essential in making them come back to avail of more services. The quality of care rendered includes properly informing clients about their skin problems and providing them with treatment options to choose from. Educating them about what is best for their skin, and what alternatives they can do to maintain its health is also crucial for multiplying customers who will come for consultation in the future.

What did you learn about yourself: Personal Discoveries

I thought I knew what it took to run a successful business. I always thought that having the latest technology was enough to draw clients into the clinic. I realized later that this was not enough. Personal qualities also needed polishing and development. Professionalism is first and foremost an aspect that needs to be learned, developed, and practiced. Without this, one's business values will be poor and will cause the business to suffer.

How did this activity strengthen your self leadership skills?

The activity has allowed introspection to be done. As I examined myself regarding my feelings, thoughts, and motives about management and leadership, I found myself dealing with bad habits and replacing them with the principles I gained from training. I've learned to be more mature in dealing with people and in running a business. To chart the course of the business and believe that it can be achieved.

I've learned how to develop and polish a vision with which I can run with and communicate to others so that they may be partners in making the business progress. I also learned the value of discipline and what needs to be done to keep a healthy and happy enterprise. I adopted all these and noticed changes in the way I conducted business deals. Thus far, the feedbacks I've obtained were all positive. I am grateful for the lessons and insights I gained from the activity for it has made me a better person and now I swell with pride and would like to share these with others also.

How did this activity improve your communication/interpersonal skills?

People are important for it is they who can make or break a business. People skills need to be developed to help the business grow. With the strategies I gained from the activity, I was able to expand my people-making skills and increase my influence by maintaining rapport with clients. Being able to inform the clients properly and educating them about dos and don'ts in skin care helped enhance my skills in interpersonal communication. Keeping a smile, greeting customers, providing suggestions, and exchanging ideas with people around me proved a big help for enriching my communication skills.

Rough roads, detours or roadblocks

Thus far, no hindrances or barriers have been experienced. The only thing I remember was that uncomfortable feeling on having a cousin for a trainer. But when this feeling is eliminated and pride is lowered to welcome corrections and good instruction, then everything will go well.

Comments on personal effectiveness

I've adopted the principles myself and utilized these every time I go to the clinic. Other than that, I also use the principles of people and influence to my advantage to polish my interpersonal communication skills. Feedbacks have been very positive and I use this as my yardstick for effectiveness.

Was this a valuable experience for you? Importance of the Activity

On the job training is an effective tool in developing a person's character, business knowledge, and skills. The activity for me was a very valuable experience because I learned first hand what it takes to own and manage a business, be an effective and efficient business leader, and be an exemplary figure for others to follow. It helps if one works side by side with a leader. The leader's character, life principles, philosophies, and strategies are learned immediately. Other than this, being with such people is encouraging because one gets stimulated to do the same things they do, think the same way they do, and compose one's self as they do.

Leaders are catalysts for improvement. Living by their example will make persons significant in their chosen field of activity in the future.