

Leadership experience report from theory to practice report sample

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE REPORT: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

1. Introduction

The present report is based on the writer's field experience as a volunteer of the church (Preach The word Evangelical Church). The report is basically based on the structure of the church as an organization, SWOT analysis, leadership challenges and an overall learning that occurred during the 6 week volunteering in the above mentioned church.

The following are the theoretical perspectives on some of the main aspects of the church as a non-profit making organization:

1. 1. Organization of the Church

Cole cites, 'The church that Jesus built was HIS church. Jesus Christ is Himself its foundation (I Cor. 3: 11). He is the Savior of the church (Eph. 5: 23). As the church belongs to Jesus Christ, the New Testament lays the guidelines and the regulations for the organization of the church. (www.westarkchurchofchrist.org/library/topic6.htm)

Let us examine the organization of the churches in general:

1. 1. 1. Church Members

Members are said to be believers who volunteer themselves to do the service for the community while being at a church. There is no limitation of the age for membership, however those who are below 16 years of their age, they are designated as youth members. The following services and privileges

are generally extended only to the members: further training for leadership, designation as a leader, the right to nominate others for leadership. Youth members also enjoy similar facilities like other members except being able to be appointed as a ministry leader.

1. 1. 1. 1. Responsibilities of the church members

The members (including youth members) are responsible for the following: Acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior, active participation in the church activities, a behavior that reflects love towards all human beings (according to the policies of the church).

2. Leadership Principles

The leadership principles/styles are derived from the findings of the researches carried out in the field of personality. In other words, personality is a variable and leadership is the outcome. (Judge, T. A., Bono, J. E., Ilies, R., & Gerhardt, M. W. ; 2002 and Lord, R. G., De Vader, C. L., & Alliger, G. M. 1986). The following are some of the principle of the leadership practised in the church:

2. 1. Love-motivated leadership:

The principles that were preached by Jesus are of the prime importance, and 'love' is one of them.

2. 2. Christ-centered leadership

The leadership style in which Christ holds the most important and noble place is always recommended during the church related activities.

2. 3. Mission and vision-driven Leadership

Churches are the noble places that are established for the promotion of

certain noble vision and mission, therefore, the leadership also incorporates such concepts.

2. 4. Servant leadership

According to the guidelines of the Christian missionaries, a member or a Christian is a servant and slave to Christ and the community, therefore, the leader is also a kind of a servant. Thus, his leadership gets shaped accordingly. (Zani, Dannhauser, 2007)

2. 5. Dedicated leadership

Since the church is a missionary and the members are the servant in a non-profit making institution, all the workers are found as dedicated for their noble and selfless job.

2. 6. Participative leadership

Every member associated with the mission of the church is well connected for the attainment of the objective of the church. Each one participates as a servant and a member.

3. Church leadership offices

There are certain offices under the ministry. The following are some of them: Teachers' office, Preachers, Deacons, and the office of the Elders. The following is a general hierarchy in the church: GOD - CHRIST - ELDERS - MEMBERS (including teachers, preachers, and deacons)

3. 1. Church volunteers: role and duties

A 'church volunteer' is the member who has offered his services for the community and God on voluntary basis (without any monetary intentions). As it is quite clear from the nomenclature that 'Volunteers' basically serve the church with an aim to achieve the noble objectives. The service of a

volunteer may roughly be characterized as selfless actions without any intentions of monetary gains. The theory of volunteering services is based on the service of the community or in other words, the service to God.

3. 2. The official Responsibilities of a church volunteer

Various duties have been identified to be performed by a church volunteer. The duties include coordination with various groups. Other volunteering duties include the services like 'greeting guests and members', coordination with them, providing services of the best kind or organizing other events etc. In addition, the coordinators/leaders are supposed to discharge some administrative duties as well depending on the need of institution.

3. 3. Challenges of a volunteer's job

As 'volunteers' usually demand no monetary benefit. Volunteering duties may be ignored to some extent for different reasons. As volunteers are also human beings, they owe some responsibilities, consequently digressing from the service to occupation: a characteristics of the modern 21st century, but materialistic society.

3. 3. 1. Monetary gains

Some leaders within the volunteer ministry may be paid a compensation or hourly honorarium to organize and utilise the volunteering service. The positions that are benefitted especially include: Director of Volunteers, or Volunteer Coordinator. Such officials may be compensated with other benefits such as insurance or further education/training in the field of volunteerism.

3. 3. 2. Enhancing leadership skills

Most church staff members find that the process of becoming effective in

coordination/leadership by enhancing leadership skills is a lifelong challenging perspective. There are certain attitudinal that are found more useful and effective in organization than others depending on the specific traits and leadership qualities.

3. 3. 3. Management

The following is a summary of essential aspects that are generally involved in the management of a church office: self and staff disciplining, processing systematic work/office work. In order to accomplish the aims of managerial functions, one has to follow certain guidelines and regulations. In addition, infrastructural facilities like proper office set up, equipping office with novel technology etc are also needed for successful completion of the targets.

3. 3. 4. Development of professional skill

It is always important that one must have the appropriate understanding of the behaviour of the target group one is attached with in an institution (Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F., (2010). The training needs can be identified later, and accordingly be dealt with.

3. 3. 5. Learning the worker's traits

Learning the nature and type of personality of the target group is another area that a leader has to deal with. (Stogdill, R. M. (1948). There are certain specific categories and each one has some advantages and disadvantages.

3. 3. 6. Understanding the workers and leadership style

A coordinator/ leader, simultaneously, is a sub ordinate as well as a leader (super ordinate) in a given perspective. Two leadership styles can't better than the other; they are just different. An individual with an autocratic or self-centred work style displays specific administrative behavior (Judge, T. A.,

Bono, J. E., Ilies, R., & Gerhardt, M. W. (2002). They may be quite effective in a given situation. Thus, it is inevitable not to ignore such individual differences that must be taken into account while recruiting/staffing new members of the staff

3. 3. 7. Communication skill

Communication is one of the functions of a leader. It is also a fact that not all are born effective communicator. Therefore, one has to learn communicative techniques and train people to get communicated because communication is a bi-polar activity.

3. 3. 7. 1. Communicate policies, visions and plans etc

Communication is the leader's function. Thus, he tries to let people to know about his plans, aims/objectives, and expectations from his staff in a highly professional manner.

3. 3. 7. 2. Communicate personal choice

The leader needs to let the sub-ordinates know as to what mode of communication does the leader prefers. Since, the electronic media is on its swing, modern leaders use e-mails and instant messages for communication. It is noticed that staff members often follow one procedure, and then a new leader takes over who wants information processed in a different format depending on his experience and innovative mind.

3. 3. 7. 3. Chair the youth ministries committee

You as a coordinator of the youth ministries of the church have to hold meetings with different groups of staff members.

3. 3. 7. 4. Managing office staff

Once you have selected your staff, the real work begins. Few leaders are

totally comfortable having the super-ordinate's chair. They love being leaders/coordinators, but many of the duties involved in managing/coordination beyond his position's premise which he is supposed to handle effectively.

4. Leadership experience as a Volunteer/coordinator

I volunteered for the youth group that was though quite different from at least economic viewpoint yet it remained a fact that most teenagers generally had similar needs and aspirations of life. While I was working with them as a coordinator doing nothing great but quite simple things like assisting the youth in the form of sharing experiences with them. As a Youth Volunteer my goal was to create a healthy environment that characterizes support and cooperation to achieve commonly conceived goals. My placement as a volunteer /coordinator has got to have been one of the best experiences of my life. I was at Preach the word Evangelical Church. I was made to I was warmly welcomed by everyone from day one.

During my time (six weeks) at Preach the word Evangelical Church, I was involved in all of the programmes that it runs within the Community Ministry. For me, it was a golden opportunity to serve the church as a volunteer/coordinator. It was a great learning experience in general and leadership in particular in both the coordinator and as a sub- ordinate. I'd like to think that I made a bit of a difference to the church. I felt such an important sense of duty towards the community that really got into a volunteer's heart. Every day was a different experience altogether. Since I had chosen this noble profession, I always looked forward to going into work.

The experience was so lively that I was bound to decide even my career as a worker or a volunteer at a particular church especially in the UK.

When I joined as a volunteer I didn't really know what I was getting into. I knew I wanted to do something good for others. Throughout the time I spent there at church, it became clear that my people skills were really working to help each other in the groups for betterment. I was enjoying each activity. When I came back after completing my volunteering job, I was a changed and completely a new person. If I could volunteer every day I would. That's how good it was and how much I know it's necessary for those you're helping the community including myself.

I had mixed experience as a youth coordinator. Nearly all the experiences were healthy, fruitful and skill oriented. But, at times, I found myself a bit restless due to certain things that I studied in the theory of leadership or hierarchy which were not exactly found in the administrative structure of the church because the institution is a non-profit making, and the workers are basically volunteers who joined the church to serve the mankind. However, there are not many full time workers consequently leading to scarcity of the staff.

I have no hesitation in mentioning that I enjoyed every bit of experience coordinating with the youth and learnt a lot of skills through getting to know them, it helped increase my patience. I genuinely feel concerned for the community I worked with. I think it made me more confident at my ability to make friends in a new place and just throw myself out there. Everyone I met

generally had a nice heart and eternal desire to bring out the best in people-
the real education.

References

Cole, M. S. (www. westarkchurchofchrist. org/library/topic6. htm)

Judge, T. A., Bono, J. E., Ilies, R., & Gerhardt, M. W. (2002). Personality and leadership: A qualitative and quantitative review. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*, 765-780.

Lord, R. G., De Vader, C. L., & Alliger, G. M. (1986). A meta-analysis of the relation between personality traits and leader perceptions: An application of validity generalization procedures. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 71*, 402-410.

Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F., (2010). *Leadership, Theory, Application, & Skill Development*. (4th ed). Mason, OH: South-Western Cengage Learning.

Stogdill, R. M. (1948). Personal factors associated with leadership: A survey of the literature. *Journal of Psychology, 25*, 35-71.

Zani, Dannhauser (2007) *The Relationship between Servant Leadership, Follower Trust, Team Commitment and Unit Effectiveness*, Doctoral Thesis, Stellenbosch University 2007