

RL101: Identify Your Leadership Strengths

RL101 - Identify Your Own Leadership Strengths was originally designed and prepared for Recreation North by Brenda Herchmer and Wendy Lahey with some editing by Caroline Sparks. The tool used in the Pilot, Understanding Your Leadership Style, was developed and is owned by Brenda Herchmer, Grassroots Enterprises. Any changes to this tool require permission. Development was funded by the Arctic Inspiration Prize. RL101 was revised for Program delivery by Caroline Sparks.

Description:

This learning event explores some of the things recreation leaders need to know and be able to do when working or volunteering in their community. Your own path will begin to emerge as you learn more about yourself and identify opportunities to develop as a recreation leader.

Learning Objectives:

- Recognize leadership qualities and characteristics.
- Identify competencies to work or volunteer in community recreation roles.
- Set goals to grow as a leader.

Required Learning Activities:

- How do I understand leadership?
- Leadership Growth Plan

Week 1:

A broad understanding of recreation leadership is essential for working and volunteering in community recreation. Community recreation leaders fill a variety of roles and make their communities a better place to live, work and play. Recognizing characteristics and qualities of a leader, and how these are reflected in self and others, is an important step in leadership development.

Key teaching points

- Leadership is influenced by family, upbringing, community, culture, values, beliefs, education, work and volunteer roles, etc.
- There are many leaders in our communities; some of whom are more obvious than others. Recreation leaders may be in formal roles (e.g. recreation programmer) or informal roles (e.g. hockey parent).
- A broad understanding of leadership lets us recognize the variety of qualities, talents, skills, and experiences that others demonstrate as leaders. From this

understanding it becomes easier to recognize one's own leadership strengths and areas for growth.

- In the North, it is particularly important to encourage leadership development among current and future recreation leaders and among youth.

Reflective questions to encourage learning:

- What does 'leader' or 'leadership' mean to you?
- Who are the recreation leaders in your community?
- Explain what struck you the most after exploring perspectives on (recreation) leadership.
- Describe one thing we can do to build capacity for recreation in the North.
- What other strategies will strengthen recreation leadership in the North?

Week 2:

Recreation capacity and leadership are national and Northern priorities. The attitudes, knowledge and skills recreation leaders demonstrate can be described through 13 core competencies. A personal learning plan or organizational training plan can be developed from an assessment of these competencies.

Key teaching points

- Recreation serves the public good when there are accessible recreation opportunities. Recreation organizations need capacity to foster benefits from recreation. Capacity refers to skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to lead, manage and volunteer.
- The Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015, p. 28) explains that, "The recreation field needs to recruit and inspire new leaders (of all ages) who can address emerging trends and have knowledge in a variety of areas, such as cultural diversity, emerging technologies, urban planning, active transportation and nature conservation. All who work in recreation need to acquire and attain the core competencies for recreation and the capacity to address changes in the physical and social environments that impact recreation."
- Capacity—having enough competent leaders in our communities to ensure meaningful recreation experiences—requires awareness of recreation as a career and an investment in training and education.
- The Recreation North Training Program was developed from 13 foundational competencies for leading in recreation.
- The Self-Assessment Tool can be used by individuals and by organizations to assess strengths and areas for growth. The tool uses indicators to assess each competency.

Competency is a combination of attitudes, knowledge, skills and experience.

Indicator is a description to explore the different knowledge and skills that together make up the competency.

- Help learners understand informal learning opportunities (mentoring, coaching, conferences, Facebook group, etc.) as well as the more formal training and education that may be of interest (e.g. MACA, NMTO, post-secondary).

Reflective questions to encourage learning:

- What did I learn about myself as a leader?
- Did this change my understanding of leadership?
- How will you continue to grow as a recreation leader?

Required Learning Activity: How do I understand leadership?

Before beginning this RLA, read some brief perspectives on leadership from other resources such as those below. Ask yourself, “What does ‘leader’ or ‘leadership’ mean?”

- At the Heart of It - found in this folder <files.recnorth.ca/LEres/At-the-heart-of-it.pdf>
- Northern Youth Abroad blog - <http://nya.ca/blog>

To complete this RLA, reflect on what you have read. Consider the following questions. Then, prepare and post a response to each question.

1. Who is a leader in my life?
2. What is a symbol that represents this person’s leadership? Explain what this symbol represents.
3. How am I a leader?

Read the reflections posted by others. Respond thoughtfully to at least one person.

Required Learning Activity: Leadership Growth Plan

This Required Learning Activity (RLA) is an individual activity and will only be shared with your trainer.

Instructions:

1. Work through all RL101 activities and participate in both conference calls.
2. Complete the Self-Assessment Tool (Activity #5 - Identify your own Competencies).
3. Scroll down the page in Activity #7 to find a template with suggested questions to help you develop your Leadership Growth Plan. Choose either a Word or a PDF template. Or, develop your Plan using your own format.
4. Share your Leadership Growth Plan with your trainer using the SUBMIT button. If you need help with this, please ask.

Suggested Growth Plan Questions:

- Through RL101 and other activities, I have come to better understand myself as a recreation leader. I have learned about myself that...
- My strengths as a recreation leader are:
- My opportunities for growth as a recreation leader (developing attitudes, knowledge, skills and experiences) include:
- To continue developing as a recreation leader, I will...
- How will I achieve these goals? What specifically do I need to do? When?
- What barriers might make it difficult to work towards my goals? What could I do to overcome these?
- What will be different for me when I reach my goals?

Resources and References:

Resources

- RL101 LE Presentation
- Leadership Self-Assessment Tool – https://files.recnorth.ca/LEres/Leadership-Self-Assessment-Tool_Form.pdf
- Leadership Growth Plan template - https://files.recnorth.ca/LEres/Leadership_Growth_Plan_template.pdf

Activities

- Required Learning Activities – 2 described above
- HP5 Activity - Explore competencies for leading in recreation

Videos/Audio

Bresnahan, R. (2017, August 2) *Northern Youth Abroad* [audio podcast]. Retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/listen/shows/ottawa-morning/segment/13560641>

David Hickey for CPRA. Stories from the Field; A Means to a Greater Beginning. (2016). Canadian Parks and Recreation Association. Web: <https://www.cpra.ca/framework-implementation/> Audio created by Caroline Sparks: <https://files.recnorth.ca/audio/Means-Greater-Beginning.mp3>

Niigaan (2013, March 9). *In Conversation: Leanne Simpson* [video file] Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/I5E2Rskkdi4?t=6m42s>

Wright-Fraser, Karen (unknown) CBC radio recording from Aboriginal Day storytelling event, Fred Henne Park and Cultural Site, NWT [audio recording-mp3] permission granted by Loren McGinnis lorenmcginnis@gmail.com

References

NWT Education, Culture and Employment. (2003). Module 4: Leadership: The Legend of Sahbawet'ue, The Fish Skin Man. Education: A Dene Perspective (Curriculum Document, Grade 8).

Taniton, R., & Willett, M. (2011). *At the Heart of It*. Markham, Ontario: Fifth House Ltd.

Young Leon, A. (2012) Elders Teachings on Leadership: Leadership as a Gift. In Kenny, C. and Ngaroimata Fraser, T., (Eds.), *Elders Teachings on Leadership: Leadership as a Gift, Living Indigenous Leadership: Native Narratives on Building Strong Communities*. (pp. 48-63). Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press.

Excerpt *Developing Your Talents* adapted from Dene Kede Grade 8 Curriculum, Dept of Education, Culture and Employment, Government of the NWT