



Unit: Understanding Leadership
Skill2: Distinguishing Between Born vs. Created
Activity A: I Am a Leader Because...

Activity Skills:

Self reflection, writing.

Leadership Skills:

Assessing personal traits and skills relative to leadership.

Suggested Level:

Beginning

Time:

20 minutes

Supplies needed:

- Blank paper/cards to have students list their leadership statements.
- Pens or pencils.

Do Ahead:

N/A

Source:

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BACKGROUND:

Introduce the group to idea that some people are considered natural leaders, while other people have to work harder at being leaders. Discuss whether the students think leaders are born or created. If they are born, or considered natural leaders, what traits or skills do these individuals have? Brainstorm some of these personal leadership traits and skills as a group – list in front of everyone if possible. If the traits and skills can be identified, then can't any person learn them?

WHAT TO DO:

Since this exercise is about self-knowledge, this activity is conducted by each individual. Ask students to consider their individual personality traits, abilities and skills within a leadership context. Have each student finish the statement, "I am a leader because..." Encourage them to write as many endings to the phrase as they can think of in ~3 minutes. Have each student share at least one statement that they've written about themselves (everyone should have at least a few!)

TALK IT OVER:**Reflect:**

- What kinds of personal traits, abilities and skills did people come up with as being important to leadership?
- Can leadership be taught or learned?
- Why do people get called "natural leaders?" Are they really born that way, or did they work to develop those skills?

Apply:

- How did defining your traits and abilities help you?
- Do you see how some of your strengths support being a leader?
- Do you see gaps in your abilities where you could improve your leadership skills?
- Next time you are thinking about leaders, how would this exercise change your perceptions?

BEYOND THE BOX:**Optional Homework:**

Ask students to research other leadership development or training programs. What kinds of things do they teach? What kinds of things, besides structured training programs or taking classes, can individuals do to strengthen their personal leadership skills?

Notes:

Resources and Web Links: