Fostering leadership at all levels

Leadership Development for Women Program 2017
Charles Sturt University

Jessica Biles, Arnela Ceric, Ashleigh Coleman, Georgina Davies, Morgan Harrigan, Kristy Robson and Katie Sheridan
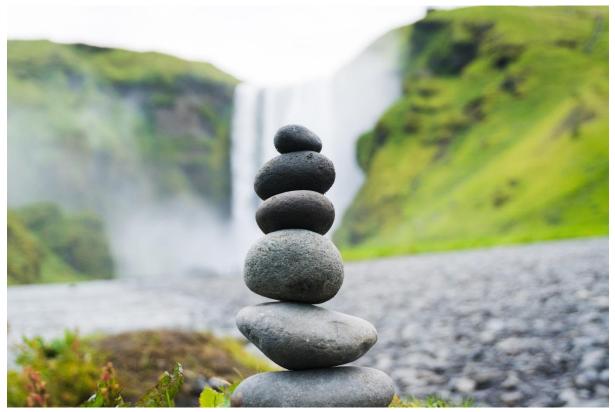
Figure 1. Balance (Sanchez, n.d.).

Executive summary

In order to understand how we can nurture and develop our leaders at Charles Sturt University (CSU), we needed to first identify and understand what leadership means to individuals within our organisation. With this objective in mind, our LDW project team conducted a survey across CSU which was disseminated via 'What's New'. Invitations to complete the survey were also distributed to each of the project team member's division, organisational unit or school, as well as all to participants undertaking the Leadership Development for Women (LDW) in 2017. In addition, previous alumni of the LDW program were also invited to complete the survey as well as participants of other leadership courses run through CSU's Human Resources division. A total of 89 participants completed the survey of which 75% were female (See Appendix 2 for further demographic information).

Analysis of the survey results identified a number of key findings. Of the survey respondents, 67% of participants considered themselves to be in a position of leadership. However, only 32% of participants surveyed linked the term 'leadership' to self-leadership attributes such as empowering or positively influencing others, rather than the traditional top-down managerial approach associated with a job position or orientated towards tasks. Evidence suggests that attributes of empowerment through self-leadership can be effective in facilitating employees to lead themselves, and others, which has positive outcomes not only for the organisation but also for the individual (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015; Aheare, Mathieu & Rapp, 2005; Druskat &Wheeler, 2003). Interestingly, the survey findings suggested that participants perceived that the most common way to develop leadership skills and capabilities at CSU was through learning on the job (trial and error) rather than access to professional development opportunities. Evidence suggests that there is a distinction between developing leaders and developing leadership capabilities (Day 2000). Learning on the job may provide individuals with opportunities to authentically learn and problem solve through trial and error within their own context. However, the challenges facing effective leadership within contemporary organisations is often much more complex and requires ongoing evidence-based intrapersonal and interpersonal development over time to enable transferability of skills (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm & McKee, 2013; Day, 2011). In addition, the key challenges raised by participants in developing their own leadership skills and capabilities focused on a perceived lack of opportunity to undertake professional development within the leadership context, current workloads and limited recognition and rewards when demonstrating effective leadership capabilities and competencies.

The findings from this survey has highlighted a number of important areas for further developing and supporting leadership at all levels at CSU. Firstly, there needs to be a greater emphasis on shifting the focus of leadership from an employee management approach to developing self-leadership

capabilities among all employees. While the intent of the CSU Leadership Capability and Competency Framework (Appendix 1) clearly articulates this, there is potential to broaden the support and development of the concept of self-leadership for all employees across the organisation, rather than an emphasis on individuals applying for managerial positions. Enabling professional development opportunities that strongly align to the CSU values with self-leadership attribute training may be one way to foster leadership capabilities within all employees. Secondly, there is a perceived gap between leadership skills that are needed at CSU and those that are rewarded at CSU, which commonly were perceived by the participants to be, having a strategic focus and communicating with influence. Opportunities may exist to enable greater recognition of leadership capabilities across the organisation rather than the perceived current reward system which seems to focus on leadership competencies and only some of the capabilities, such as strategic direction, shown in in the CSU Leadership Capability and Competency Framework.   Finally, shifting the general perception that only managerial roles are responsible for leadership to a more inclusive approach that empowers all individuals to engage in self-leadership at all levels, through a dedicated initiatives targeting these areas, may better prepare individuals to work within the current complex environment and improve job satisfaction.

Our findings lead to the following suggestions on developing and supporting leadership at all levels at CSU:

- Develop innovative professional development initiatives to enable all people to improve self-leadership capabilities that they can instigate at all levels within the University
- Further focus on development of the leadership capabilities at all levels aligned to the CSU values to enable staff to demonstrate a) inspiring a sense of purpose and direction, b) guiding, mentoring and developing people and c) developing and nurturing relationships and networks;
- Address the gap between leadership skills that are needed, and those that are rewarded at CSU (having a strategic focus, and communicating with influence) by developing innovative strategies to recognise individuals demonstrating CSU values and leadership capabilities at all levels of the University
- Increase awareness of the existing CSU initiatives and courses for developing leadership capabilities and competencies. Provide opportunities to employees to attend these courses (workloads and funding).
- Actively engage Managers and Supervisors to support the leadership journeys of staff in their teams.

Contents

Questionnaire

Our questionnaire consisted of 19 questions that focused on different aspects of leadership at CSU. We used the current CSU Leadership Capability and Competency Framework (see Appendix 1) in developing the survey questions.

1. *Define what leadership means to you in the box below.*
2. *What is your experience of leadership at CSU?*
3. *What attributes do you value in a leader?*
4. *Do you consider yourself to be a leader at CSU?*
5. If answered yes, why do you consider yourself a leader?
6. *Which leadership skills do you exercise in your current role?*
7. *From your perspective, which leadership skills are critical in effective leadership at CSU?*
8. *From your perspective, which leadership capabilities are critical in influencing people at CSU?*
9. *How would you rate your leadership skills?*
10. *What assisted you in developing leadership skills at CSU?*
11. *Where there any challenges that you encountered in developing leadership skills at CSU?*
12. *What helped you to overcome these challenges? Please add you answer in the box below.*
13. *Based on your experience and observations, which leadership skills are needed at CSU?*
14. *Based on your experience and observations, which leadership skills are rewarded at CSU?*
15. *How could CSU support their employees (you) in further developing leadership skills?*
16 *Gender*
17 *Role*
18 *Length of employment at CSU*
19 Time in the leadership role

Questions were analysed using SPSS. Four questions were open ended so respondents needed to state the answer in their own words. Due to the qualitative nature of these answers we have used NVivo software to analyse them.

Respondents

Respondents were predominantly Female (75.82%) working as professional staff (47.3%) with over 5 years of employment at CSU (51.6%) and more than one year of experience in leadership roles (69.23%). For more information on respondents' demographic characteristics, please see Appendix 2.

Findings

In order to understand respondents' perceptions of leadership at CSU, we have divided our findings into three key sections. The first section focuses on the CSU leadership context. The second section discusses respondents' personal journeys with a focus on challenges they have experienced and strategies used to overcome these challenges. Finally, the third section of the report discusses findings from the other questions in the survey.

1 CSU leadership context

1.1 Skills critical for effective leadership at CSU (Q7)

The answer to this question revealed the key leadership skill perceived to be critical in effective leadership at CSU. The highest ranked skill is inspiring a sense of purpose and direction (74.8%). Closely ranked is guiding, mentoring and developing people (64.9%). Self-leading (8.8%) and leading teams (8.8%) are the two leadership skills that are least critical in effective leadership at CSU.

Table 1: Effective leadership at CSU

Leadership skills	Pref1 (%)	Pref2 (%)	Pref3 (%)	Sum
Inspiring a sense of purpose and direction	30.8	28.6	15.4	74.8
Guiding, mentoring and developing people	18.7	22.0	24.2	64.9
Communicating with influence	9.9	19.8	6.6	36.3
Developing and nurturing relationships and networks	8.8	7.7	14.3	30.8
Having a strategic focus	17.6	6.6	5.5	29.7
Harnessing information and opportunities	2.2	4.4	14.3	20.9
Self-leading and self-development	3.3	1.1	4.4	8.8
Leading teams	1.1	2.2	5.5	8.8
Total	92.4	92.4	90.2	

1.2 Leadership in action: Leadership skills critical in influencing people at CSU (Q8)

Communicating with influence (55%), inspiring a sense of purpose (56.1%), guiding, mentoring and developing people (57.2%) and developing and nurturing relationships and networks (45.1%) are identified as critical leadership capabilities in influencing people at CSU. On the other hand, leading teams (4.4%), self-leading and self-development (12.1), harnessing information and opportunities (17.6%) and having a strategic focus (18.7%) are ranked low and are hence, not considered to be critical in influencing people at CSU.

Table 2: Leadership capabilities critical for influencing people

Leadership capabilities	Pref1	Pref2	Pref3	Sum
Self-leading and self-development	4.4	4.4	3.3	12.1
Leading teams	1.1	2.2	1.1	4.4
Guiding, mentoring and developing people	16.5	12.1	28.6	57.2
Communicating with influence	31.9	18.7	4.4	55
Developing and nurturing relationships and networks	11.0	18.7	15.4	45.1
Inspiring a sense of purpose and direction	20.9	24.2	11.0	56.1
Having a strategic focus	5.5	5.5	7.7	18.7
Harnessing information and opportunities	0	3.3	14.3	17.6
Total	91.2	89.0	85.7	

1.3 Leadership skills needed at CSU (Q13)

Three leadership skills that are critical at CSU based on the survey data are inspiring a sense of purpose and direction (66%), guiding, mentoring and developing people (58.3%), and developing and nurturing relationships and networks (39.6%). Self-leading (11%) and leading teams (12.1%) are ranked as the least needed leadership skills at CSU.

Table 3: Leadership skills needed at CSU (%)

Leadership skills	Pref1	Pref2	Pref3	Sum
Inspiring a sense of purpose and direction	19.8	20.9	25.3	66
Guiding, mentoring and developing people	25.3	16.5	16.5	58.3
Developing and nurturing relationships and networks	6.6	23.1	9.9	39.6
Communicating with influence	12.1	7.7	7.7	27.5
Having a strategic focus	13.2	7.7	3.3	24.2
Harnessing information and opportunities	3.3	6.6	8.8	18.7
Leading teams	2.2	4.4	5.5	12.1
Self-leading and self-development	6.6	1.1	3.3	11
None	1.1			1.1
Total	90.1	87.9	80.2	

1.4 Leadership skills rewarded at CSU (Q14)

Survey results indicate that having a strategic focus (37.4%) is the most rewarded leadership skill at CSU. Interestingly, guiding, mentoring and developing people (3.3%), as well as inspiring a sense of purpose and direction (7.7%), and developing and nurturing relationships and networks (8.8%) are perceived to be least rewarded leadership skills. This is in direct contrast to the findings on the most needed leadership skills at CSU.

Table 4: Leadership skills rewarded at CSU

	Pref1	Pref2	Pref3	Sum
Self-leading and self-development	12.1	5.5	2.2	19.8
Leading teams	13.2	3.3	4.4	20.9
Guiding, mentoring and developing people	1.1		2.2	3.3
Communicating with influence	8.8	12.1	6.6	27.5
Developing and nurturing relationships and networks	3.3	2.2	3.3	8.8
Inspiring a sense of purpose and direction	2.2	2.2	3.3	7.7
Having a strategic focus	20.9	12.1	4.4	37.4
Harnessing information and opportunities	3.3	8.8	12.1	24.2
None	26.4	1.1		27.5
Total	91.2	47.3	38.5	

2 Respondents' personal journeys

2.1 Respondents' leadership skills (Q9)

Based on the survey data, we can conclude that most participants rated their skills as standard to excellent, however almost 16% of respondents feels they need to work on and improve their systematic and strategic leadership skills rating these as basic or insufficient.

Table 5: Survey participants' leadership skills (%)

	Self-Leadership	Leading Others	Engagement	Systematic	Strategic
Excellent	24.2	13.19	26.4	10.99	8.8
Good	58.2	56.04	37.4	35.16	35.2
Standard	9.9	12.09	19.8	26.37	29.7
Basic	1.1	2.20	2.2	12.09	11
Insufficient	0.0	1.10	1.1	3.30	5.5
Total	93.4	84.62	86.8	87.91	90.1

2.2 Reasons participants do/do not consider themselves as leaders (Q4)

Of the people surveyed, 67% indicated that they considered themselves as a leader, which through content analysis of the open ended questions found that there were two overarching reasons for someone to consider themselves a leader; The first was driven by a job title or position description that incorporated leadership roles or tasks, and the other focused on respondent's ability to demonstrate attributes that they believe aligned with what they perceived leadership to be.

Of the participants that perceived leadership to be based on managerial tasks, (63% of the people surveyed), commonly sighted answers focused around an understanding that leadership was only defined by a person's role and specific tangible tasks one undertakes in the workplace. Respondents were also disempowered when they had not been given a formal leadership role. These themes can be seen in the following examples:

Respondents' quotes

My role is responsible for providing leadership to a team

I chair meetings. I lead processes. I offer assistance. I make decisions. I give answers. I am the go to person in my role

Because of the roles that I have been in and because a number of people have commented on my leadership ability
I am not encouraged to be a leader because I am not in management or given the opportunity.

I'm not in a traditional leadership position so feel my view is not important

---

Only 32% of survey participants perceived themselves to be a leader based on the attributes or capabilities they bring to the organisation. Common leadership attributes focused on supporting others around them as can be seen the examples below.

Respondents' quotes

I encourage and support staff to be brave and creative in their approach. I see opportunities and act on them. I take a holistic approach and shape future direction/initiatives

Because I am a good communicator, I listen to my team and respect them. I am also willing to challenge myself and the team to strive for better and I am focused on developing staff's skills

---

Analysis of the open-ended responses for this question found that the majority of respondent's perceived leadership to be framed more towards the traditional top-down managerial approach rather than focusing on the capabilities outlined in the CSU Leadership Capability and Competency Framework. This perception limits opportunities to empower all individuals within the organisation to view themselves as having influence even within a self-leadership framework.

2.3 Factors that assisted participants in developing leadership skills at CSU (Q10)

Learning on the job (trial and error) (50.6%) seems to be the most dominant pathway towards learning leadership skills. This is followed by work itself requires the respondent to communicate with and influence others (34.1%), and ability to communicate with others (34.1%).

Coaching, ability to use appropriate technology, knowledge of who is who at CSU and knowledge of CSU policies and procedures are the lowest ranked factors that assist respondents in developing their leadership skills.

Table 6: Support in developing leadership skills at CSU (%)

Leadership skills	Pref1	Pref2	Pref3	Sum
Training programs offered by CSU	9.9	6.6	2.2	18.7
Training programs outside CSU	7.7	6.6	3.3	17.6
Mentors	11.0	8.8	2.2	22
Coaching	0.0	0.0	2.2	2.2
Conversations, advice and guidance from your manager	11.0	9.9	8.8	29.7
Learning on the job (trial and error)	15.4	20.9	14.3	50.6
Self-leadership activities	11.0	11.0	7.7	29.7
Work itself requires me to communicate with and influence others	11.0	7.7	15.4	34.1
Ability to communicate with others	7.7	7.7	18.7	34.1
Ability to use appropriate technology	0.0	1.1	2.2	3.3
Knowledge of CSU policies and procedures	1.1	3.3	0.0	4.4
Knowledge of who is who at CSU	0.0	0.0	3.3	3.3

I wasn't offered any support at CSU	6.6	3.3	2.2	12.1
Total	92.3	86.8	82.4	

2.4 Challenges participants encountered in developing leadership skills at CSU (Q11)

Challenges that respondents encountered in developing their leadership skills are:

- Few development opportunities at CSU (38.5%)
- Limited recognition and rewards (33%)
- Formal approval process (22%)

The last two dot-points seem to represent key challenges in developing leadership skills at CSU.

Table 7: Challenges in developing leadership skills at CSU

Challenges	Pref1	Pref2	Pref3	Sum
Workload		7.7	9.9	17.6
Work-life balance	7.7	7.7	4.4	19.8
CSU policy and admin	7.7	3.3	4.4	15.4
Supervision	11.0	5.5	2.2	18.7
Work conditions	2.2	7.7	3.3	13.2
Relationship with peers	6.6	1.1	1.1	8.8
Personal life	1.1	3.3	2.2	6.6
Security	1.1	2.2	1.1	4.4
Development opportunities at CSU	14.3	14.3	9.9	38.5
Limited recognition and rewards	5.5	14.3	13.2	33
Formal approval process	22.0			22
Campus location		5.5	4.4	9.9
I didn't encounter any challenges	4.4	4.4	6.6	15.4
Total	83.6	77	62.7	

2.5 Strategies participants used to overcome challenges (Q16)

Analysis of the open ended answers to Q16 was done by using content analysis and NVivo software.

Four or 4.49% of respondents did not experience any challenges, and 14% (n=13) of respondents did not answer this question. Finally, 22.78% (n=18) of participants reported that they *did not* overcome challenges they are experiencing.

The key strategy used by 29.21% (n=26) participants is **being proactive**. This is related to perseverance and persistence (n=8), personality (n=3), asking for help (n=2), communication (n=2) and changing roles/teams (n=2). Often respondents felt the need to find non-CSU education and training opportunities (n=8).

Respondents' quotes

> *Confidence over time, building relationships within the University, developing a reputation for being timely and efficient and reliable, making time for colleagues, ensuring my door is literally always open.*

> *Having a strong work ethic / need to have pride in my work and contributions. Working more than 40 hours most weeks.*

> *I backed myself and coughed up significant money to attend a course in Sydney I won a part scholarship for-I slept on my cousin's couch. I pushed for my Manager to place his signature on the paper for GCULM application when he said," oh the signature didn't come out on the form? Oh well, you can always apply again next year" yes, seriously.*

Key support factors that respondents identified as part of their open answers to Q16 are having a supportive manager (n=8), mentor (n=4) and one participant identified CSU training. Additional support that respondents relied on was support from their colleagues (n=4) and friends (n=2).

The analysis leads to the conclusion that respondents rarely use CSU support for developing their ability to deal with leadership challenges. The reason for this can be that they are not aware of such support, or that other factors affect their ability to access CSU support. Content analysis indicates that respondents rely on their own skills and capabilities in dealing with challenging they are experiencing. This may be the reason why they are not overcoming the challenges they are experiencing. This may ultimately lead to disappointment, and demotivation of employees.

3 Findings from other questions in the questionnaire

3.1 How respondents define leadership (Q1)

Respondents have defined leadership as identified in the table below.

Table 8: Key aspects of leadership

Key aspects of leadership	Respondents (%)
Lead by example	30
Provide direction	28
Relational (inspire, support)	27
Achieve goals	21
Develop people/teams	21
Ethical behaviour	16

The specific focus of respondents' definitions of leadership may be used as the instrument for gauging leadership at CSU. For example, how successful leader is at leading by example, or how well they provide direction to their team, could be used as indicators of leadership success.

Respondents' quotes

Leadership is something that can only be embodied. It cannot be appointed, given or anointed. True leadership is inhabited, practiced daily and requires reflection and reflexivity. It means taking others with you and often it requires that you place others before you. It is a skill and it is a challenge. It requires great emotional intelligence and even greater responsibility. It is a grace and at its core is care, empathy, compassion and deep humility.

The skill to support people to achieve goals at an individual/team or organisational level by encouraging individuals to use their strengths to a greater purpose. Not being threatened by individual's skills and knowledge.

Leadership is a continuous learning experience.

You have to earn the right to be a leader - be collaborative, supportive and recognise skills & knowledge of all staff & enact the values of the organisation.

3.2 Respondents' experience of leadership at CSU (Q2)

Based on the respondents' cumulative responses, the dominant leadership type at CSU seems to be 'Achievement-oriented' (83.6%). This type of leadership emphasises setting challenging goals, and stressing excellence in performance which aligns closely with the Employee Development and Review Scheme at CSU which asks staff to set challenging objectives they will strive to achieve and overcome throughout the review period. This achievement-oriented leadership seems to be well balanced with the second highest cumulative value, 'Supportive' leadership (72.6%) which focuses on employees' needs and wellbeing and promotes a friendly work climate.

3.3 Attributes respondents value in a leader (Q3)

Respondents ranked several leadership attributes that they value. Based on the cumulative values of responses two leadership attributes are identified to be of greatest value to respondents:

- guiding, mentoring and developing people (78.1%), and
- inspiring sense of purpose of direction (73.7%).

Interestingly, leading teams (18%) and self-development (16%) seem to be the least valued leadership attributes for the respondents.

3.4 Leadership skills respondents exercise in their current role (Q6)

Key leadership skills that participants exercise in their roles are:

- Guiding, mentoring and developing people (43%)
- Developing and nurturing relationships and networks (46%)

Having a strategic focus (16%) seems to be the least exercised leadership skill, however we found earlier in part 1.4 that this is the leadership skill most highly rewarded at CSU. Having a strategic focus was closely followed by leading teams (18%).

4. Recommendations

The following section identifies suggestions from the survey participants on how CSU can better support them in further developing leadership skills.

4.1 How could CSU support their employees in further developing leadership skills? (Question 19)

Seventy-four participants responded to this open ended question. Two responses were deemed incomplete so excluded from the analysis. Content analysis following the principles of Hsieh and Shannon (2005) "conventional inductive coding" was used to identify three emerging themes: Behaviours and Attributes, Workplace Training and Motivators. There was an overwhelming resonance with the Charles Sturt University Values (CSU, 2016). Many participants spoke about enacting and living the values as a way to foster leadership at all levels.

Behaviours and Attributes

Participants revealed a number of key characteristics that they felt would enhance and foster leadership at all levels. The characteristics described by participants seemed to lend more to a transformational and transactional styles of leadership. As discussed by Eagly and Carli (2007) it is common for leaders (broadly defined) to demonstrate a combination of styles that encourage certain behaviour and attributes. The participants voice resonated with Sinclair (2016) and her focus on moving from ego to ecological awareness; embodying self in leadership roles. Some participant's quotes that support this themes are:

Respondents' quotes

Be more open.

Employing inspirational leadership - those that "walk the talk".

More focus on soft skills, emotional intelligence, and relationship and rapport building.

Being honest and walking the walk. Being truly authentic to the phrase 'yindyamarra winhanganha'.

Workplace Training

Interestingly workplace training that enabled experiential experiences and was flexible to work/life balance was important. This is supported by literature in the area of leadership development and particularly relates to gender equity in higher education (Johnson, Warr, Hegarty & Guillemin, 2015; Rhodes & Packel, 2010). Some participant's quotes that support this themes are:

Respondents' quotes
Need an excellent mentor program across the University.
Allow an online version of the programs for those that are unable to leave family. *Continued access to professional development programs. Provide opportunities to implement these skills at work.*
Provide more opportunities to staff on smaller campuses.

Motivators

Participants suggested an awards systems that rewards skills and abilities would further support leadership development at CSU. This, in conjunction with manageable workloads and an opportunity to participate in personal evaluations was important. Some participant's quotes that support this themes are:

Respondents' quotes
Reward leadership and focus on a culture of success.
Reduce workload and provide greater recognition and encouragement.
Providing a good and easy reward and recognition program and much better staff connection tools such as the staff hub to harness cross unit collaboration and access to enabling information.
The CSU system for reward and promotion is non-existent or difficult to move unless you leave your area.

4.2 Recommendations based on the findings from the research project

Our findings lead to the following suggestions on developing and supporting leadership at all levels at CSU:

Recommendation 1

Develop innovative professional development initiatives to enable all people to improve self-leadership capabilities that they can instigate at all levels within the University. Enabling employees to undertake self-leadership training has shown to have positive outcomes including general wellbeing for employees (Houghton & Jinkerson, 2007).

Recommendation 2

Further focus on the development of leadership capabilities at all levels aligned to the CSU values to enable staff to demonstrate a) inspiring a sense of purpose and direction, b) guiding, mentoring and developing people and c) developing and nurturing relationships and networks. Utilising previous marketing strategy of disseminating the CSU values could also be modified to focus on developing leadership capabilities and competencies in all staff by empowering individuals to think creatively how they link the values to self-leadership in everyday workplace situations. Strategies could include emotional cues such as inspiring posters, reinforcing and rewarding positive support for valued colleagues and encouragement of purposely focusing on opportunities of challenges rather than obstacles (Manz et al., 2016).

Recommendation 3

Address the gap between leadership skills that are needed, and those that are rewarded at CSU by developing innovative strategies to recognise individuals demonstrating CSU values and leadership capabilities at all levels of the University. Evidence suggests that recognition, even in non-monetary forms has a positive effect on employee personal wellbeing and self-achievement which results in greater workplace effectiveness (Manz et al., 2016).

Recommendation 4

Increase awareness of the existing CSU initiatives and courses for developing leadership skills. Provide support for employees to attend these courses (workloads and funding).
Only one respondent emphasised CSU training as assisting them to develop leadership skills. This can be due to the lack of awareness of CSU leadership training opportunities.

Recommendation 5

Use the findings of this study to inform the development of the new CSU Leadership Development Framework and communication plan for promoting the framework. Have the framework linked in key places like the Division of Human Resources Manager's Toolkit.

5. Personal Reflections

Jessica Biles

The past twelve months have been a busy and exciting time. There have been many workforce, personal and study changes that have occurred: importantly, a time of endings and beginnings. The Leadership for Women has been a much needed buffer in my professional working life, opening the door to literature, networks and ways of doing leadership.

Within this time I have learnt, reflected and reconsidered my worldview. What I have come to realise is that my identity as an emerging leader at CSU doesn't need to be separate to my personal self. In fact the qualities that I have as a person are what I need to reveal in order to be an effective leader. For example, I strongly believe in reciprocity and feel that this can be an effective leadership tool.

I have appreciated the opportunities that the course has provided and the networks I have made. I value the time given to explore leadership at a greater depth and look forward to continuing this journey for many more years.

Dr Arnela Ceric, *Senior Lecturer in the School of Management and Marketing*

I've heard of Leadership for Women program a couple of years ago and was very impressed that a program like this is offered at CSU and it increased my curiosity as to why there is a need for women to learn about leadership. Does this imply that men are born with it, while women need to learn about it? And what is leadership? I started listening more, and was surprised with hearing different definitions of leadership coming from the leaders in my area. I've realised that we don't have a unified definition of leadership at CSU, and this creates confusion around who leaders are, what leaders do, and what behaviours are exemplars of leadership. There is a perception that leadership is a top secret that only the rare ones are initiated in and they are sworn to secrecy. There is also a misuse of this concept to encourage people to do the work that needs to be done by others. This is what motivated me to do the research project on leadership at all levels at CSU as part of the LDW course.

Doing LDW course brought me an important insight: leadership starts with me. I am an active part of every situation and thus, have power to influence the state of things. Awakening this inner power, and this is the power that every individual has, inspires me to create a space for listening, for being, for reflection and calming down the fear of the unknown, and to remind others of the power they have to do the same – journey down the U (Theory U from Otto Scharmer). This is the *secret ingredient* to developing trust, collaboration and community. We have a journey ahead of us, an important mission,

we need to create support mechanisms for leadership at CSU. I suggest exploring what support people at CSU need to develop leadership skills and adopt leadership behaviours for future LDW groups.

I hope we will set our sails in the direction of development of leadership that will make us even stronger and better in creating and sustaining our competitive advantage and delivering the value for our stakeholders. One of the key strengths of CSU is its people and the culture of collegiality, support and friendship. This is a great foundation for the thriving of leadership at CSU – eco leadership as opposed to the ego leadership. Providing clear understanding of leadership and pathways for developing leadership skills as well as support for people who are willing to develop themselves, grow and contribute to CSU will inspire and strengthen our culture, satisfaction and most importantly, the outcomes for our students.

Ashleigh Coleman

The LDW Program came at an opportune time for me, as this year I stepped into an Acting Manager role – the first time I have been in a Managerial role. Being able to read the materials, get support from others in the cohort, learn on the job and put theory into practice, and embarking on this new role, I feel I have grown more in my abilities within the past six months than I had in the past few years at CSU. A few things we covered in the program really excited me, and others I saw as a challenge. I've been able incorporate aspects of these excitements and challenges into my EDRS for the upcoming year to directly address these topics within myself and/or my team.

One of the most valuable aspects of this course was the connections with our Mentors. My mentor is someone I already admired greatly but did not know well. Having her guide me and problem solve with me was crucial in my learning and personal development. In some cases, I would explain what was happening within the team and she would say something like "Sounds like you have got it covered". It was incredibly reassuring to know that she would have acted in the same way in the given situation.

The current climate is trying for Higher Education, and now more than ever, we need to support each other and strive for greatness. From here I hope to be a motivator, an influencer, a supporter, an envisioner, a collaborator, and a leader, who will support and encourage those around me to bring out their best.

Georgina Davies

Wow! What an incredible journey this Leadership Development for Women course has been.

I came into the course with a very heroic understanding of leadership. I thought leaders were people in positions of power and influence. They were individuals with vision and were rewarded for delivering outcomes and having a clear focus on the future. They were managers, directors, deans, and vice chancellors. Leaders were not people like me – a Level 6 professional.

Because of this course I have learnt a completely new definition of leadership.

Leadership is not a position or a person. Leadership is influence, it's empathy, it's awareness, it's reflection, it's open communication, it's transparency, it's teamwork and it's positivity. It is our organisation's values: insightful, inclusive, impactful and inspiring. It's a skill set and it's something you need to continue to develop through your entire professional career.

This course has given me the courage to consider myself as a leader.

Morgan Harrigan

The LDW program has inspired me to reflect on my personal leadership journey. Previously I found it difficult to be mindful but the LDW program has challenged me to be present and trust my own experience.

One of the main highlights for me was working with a diverse group of inspirational leaders from different areas of the university. Our group project allowed us to collect data from CSU staff members about their leadership journey at CSU.

An interesting finding was that what leadership meant to the majority of survey respondents was not task orientated but rather related to an individual's personal attributes.

Some of the reoccurring results were that a leader should be empowering, act with integrity, remain calm, have great listening skills and lead by example. After analysing the data with my group it became clear a good leader was more than just their job title. Throughout my leadership journey I will continue to remember this.

I believe my leadership journey has only just begun and the opportunities for me to continue to develop as a leader are endless. I will continue to reflect of my experiences and grow as a leader.

Kristy Robson

I had always considered myself reasonably good at collaborating with people and also juggling multiple things at once. By undertaking the LDW program, this has provided me with the opportunity to deeply view leadership from a self-care and mindfulness perspective in order to balance work and life and facilitate a more effective way of developing leadership skills. Through this process of mindful leadership I have been able to give myself permission to self-reflect and undertake 'quietness' throughout the day, which has resulted in me being able to sharpen my focus while concentrating on the here and now rather than constantly looking ahead. I have found employing regular mindfulness activities I have learnt to deal with difficult emotions such as stress and frustration in a more effective way in order to make wiser decisions rather than reacting in the moment.

I have thoroughly enjoyed making connections and friendships with all of the participants within this program this year, who come from all facets of the university. This has been one of the most positive experiences I have gained from undertaking this program, as I feel much more connected with the people who are this institution, rather than just someone at the end of an email. Over the course of the program I have found a sense of connectedness with the other participants as part of all of our journey together, and this was especially evident through working on a common project with my team.

As a result of this program, I will continue to work on my own self-reflection and mindfulness strategies so I can get the most out of everyday experiences, both within the workplace and within my homelife.

Katie Sheridan

The LDW program has provided the opportunity to rethink how I approach my work and my daily interactions. I have been practicing mindful leadership – that is being present, in the moment and really listening to what the other person is conveying and looking at things from a different perspective.

I am now giving myself permission to pause and reflect. I feel this is helping with my everyday interactions and being a mindful employee. I am no longer rushing in and doing what needs to be done. I am more considered with my approach and interactions and looking at, and approaching things differently.

The other aspect of the program that I have enjoyed is the opportunity to meet new people and broaden my networks. I now have a greater understanding of the University. I have already connected with fellow participants to discuss a project outside this program. The networking and connecting has been a such positive experience, and it has been great to see such passionate people who really care about what they do and wanting to make a difference.

Lastly, the most important learning from the program has been that you do not need to have a title to be a leader. In various moments, situations and circumstances you can display leadership.

Overall the program has given me a level of confidence to grow as a leader and a greater understanding and appreciation of the importance of mindfulness and leadership in my personal and work interactions.

Appendix 1 CSU Leadership Capability and Competency Framework

CSU Leadership Capability and Competency Framework

Engaged
- Creates an innovative and engaged culture
- Steers and implements change
- Nurtures strong relationships and networks

Leads others
- Displays social intelligence
- Builds, leads and strengthens high performing teams
- Guides, mentors and develops people
- Communicates with influence
- Demonstrates respect for diversity

Self leading
- Demonstrates emotional intelligence
- Seeks opportunities for self development
- Acts with honesty and professionalism
- Maintains healthy work/ life balance
- Commits to action

Systematic
- Applies systems thinking
- Maintains systems integrity
- Leads continuous improvement processes

Generic Competencies
- Communicates effectively with a range of audiences
- Applies culturally respectful practices
- Utilises appropriate technology to complete work
- Applies CSU policies and procedures
- Respects and appropriately manages CSU resources

Role- Specific Competencies
- The technical knowledge and skills required to perform work role
- Details to be inserted by workplace manager

Strategic
- Inspires a sense of purpose and direction
- Focuses strategically
- Harnesses information and opportunities
- Shows judgment and intelligence

○ Capabilities

○ Competencies

Appendix 2 Demographics

Table A1: Gender of respondents

Categories	Percent
Female	75.82
Male	12.09
Do not wish to disclose	3.29
Gender	1.09
Total	92.31

Table A2: Respondents' roles

Categories	Percent
Professional staff	47.3
Academic staff	24.2
Professional/ Administrative leaders	11.0
Academic leaders	7.7
Total	90.1

Table A3: Respondents' length of employment at CSU

Categories	Percent
0-6 months	4.4
6-12 months	6.6
1-2 years	8.8
2-5 years	16.5
>5 years	51.6
Total	87.9

Table A4: Respondents' time in the leadership roles

Categories	Percent
0-6 months	10.99
6-12 months	8.79
1-2 years	21.98
2-5 years	19.78
>5 years	27.47
Total	89.01

References

Amundsen, S. and Martinsen, Ø.L. (2015), "Linking empowering leadership to job satisfaction, work effort, and creativity: the role of self-leadership and psychological empowerment", *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* , Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 304-323.

Ahearne, M., Mathieu, J., & Rapp, A. (2005). To empower or not to empower your sales force? An empirical examination of the influence of leadership empowerment behavior on customer satisfaction and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90, 945-955.

Charles Strut University (2017). Charles Sturt University "Our Values". Retrieved from *https://www.csu.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/2500884/F4972-CSU-Value-Model-FINAL.pdf.*

Day DV, Fleenor JW, Atwater LE, Sturm RE, McKee RA. (2014). Advances in leader and leadership development: a review of 25 years of research and theory. *Leadersh*. Q. 25:63–82

D.V. Day (2011). Integrative perspectives on longitudinal investigations of leader development: From childhood through adulthood. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22 (3) (2011), pp. 561-571

D.V. Day (2000). Leadership development: A review in context. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 11 (4). pp. 581-613

Druskat, V. U., & Wheeler, J. V. (2003). Managing from the boundary: The effective leadership of self-managing work teams. *Academy of Management Journal*, 46, 435-457.

Eagly, A. H., & Carli, L. L. (2007). *Through the labyrinth: The truth about how women become leaders*. Harvard Business Press.

Houghton, J. D., & Jinkerson, D. L. (2007). Constructive thought strategies and job satisfaction: A preliminary examination. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 22, 45-53.

Johnson, K. A., Warr, D. J., Hegarty, K., & Guillemin, M. (2015). Small wins: an initiative to promote gender equity in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management,* 37(6), 689–701. doi:10.1080/1360080x.2015.1102820

Manz, C.C., Houghton, J.D., Neck, C.P., Fugate, M. & Pearce, C. (2016). Whistle while you work: Toward a model of emotional self-leadership. *Journal of Leadership & Organisational Studies*. Vol. 23(4) 374–386

Rhode, D., & Packel, A. K. (2010). Diversity on Corporate Boards: How Much Difference Does Difference Make? *SSRN Electronic Journal.* doi:10.2139/ssrn.1685615

Sanchez, M. (n.d). Balance. Retrieved from https://unsplash.com/photos/MD6E2Sv__iA

Sinclair, A. (2016). *Leading Mindfully: How to focus on what matters, influence for good, and enjoy leadership   more*. Allen & Unwin.