

SUSAN R. KOMIVES, WENDY WAGNER, AND ASSOCIATES

LEADERSHIP

FOR A

BETTER WORLD

UNDERSTANDING
THE SOCIAL CHANGE MODEL OF
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT


National
Clearinghouse
for Leadership
Programs



Leadership for a Better World

**Understanding the Social Change
Model of Leadership Development**

Susan R. Komives, Wendy Wagner, and Associates

 **JOSSEY-BASS**
A Wiley Imprint
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Published by Jossey-Bass

A Wiley Imprint

989 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-1741—www.josseybass.com

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Credits appear on page 451.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Komives, Susan R., 1946-

Leadership for a better world : understanding the social change model of leadership development / Susan R. Komives, Wendy Wagner, and Associates.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-470-44949-3 (pbk.)

1. Universities and colleges—Administration. 2. College administrators—Professional relationships. 3. Educational leadership. 4. Social change. I. Wagner, Wendy (Wendy Elizabeth) II. Title.

LB2341.K66 2009

378.1'01—dc22

2009004209

Printed in the United States of America

FIRST EDITION

PB Printing

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

The National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs (NCLP) provides a central clearinghouse of leadership materials, resources, and assistance to leadership educators. NCLP members receive publications, Web access to resources, consultation assistance, and networking opportunities with other professionals engaged in leadership education with a focus on college students.

The NCLP supports cutting-edge research on leadership development, and the dissemination of knowledge through a member listserv, Web site, institutes, symposia, and high-quality publications.

The diversity of leadership programs in higher education and the dynamic nature of the subject challenge student affairs educators and faculty continually to create and refine programs, training techniques, and contemporary models to fit the changing context of leadership education. The NCLP exists to help meet that challenge.

The NCLP is proud of this publication, *Leadership for a Better World: Understanding the Social Change Model of Leadership Development*, as it complements other NCLP resources related to the Social Change Model of Leadership Development (SCM). These resources include the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS), an instrument designed to measure students' leadership capacities. NCLP also sponsors

the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership, an international research project measuring college students' leadership development using the SRLS.

Visit <http://www.nclp.umd.edu> for more information on the NCLP and other educational material on the Social Change Model.

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PREFACE

Leadership is much more an art, a belief, a condition of the heart, than a set of things to do. The visible signs of artful leadership are expressed, ultimately, in its practice.

MAX DE PREE

Welcome to a challenging and wonderful journey—a journey about the commitments needed to make this world a better place; a journey exploring how you and the people in the groups you belong to can work together for meaningful change; and ultimately, a journey into yourself. Dennis Roberts (2007), a member of the team that developed the Social Change Model of Leadership Development (SCM) presented in this book and author of *Deeper Learning in Leadership*, calls this the “Journey of Deeper Leadership” (p. 203).

THE SOCIAL CHANGE MODEL OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Contemporary times require a collaborative approach to leadership that can bring the talent of all members of a group to their shared purposes. The Social Change Model of Leadership

Development (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996) approaches leadership as a purposeful, collaborative, values-based process that results in positive social change.



ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THIS APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP

This approach to leadership is built on several key assumptions:

- ✦ “Leadership” is concerned with effecting change on behalf of others and society.
- ✦ Leadership is **collaborative**.
- ✦ Leadership is a **process** rather than a position.
- ✦ Leadership should be **value-based**.
- ✦ **All students** (not just those who hold formal leadership positions) are potential leaders.
- ✦ **Service** is a powerful vehicle for developing students’ leadership skills.

In short, the approach proposed here differs in certain basic ways from traditional approaches that view “leaders” only as those who happen to hold formal leadership positions and that regard leadership as a value-neutral process involving positional “leaders” and “followers.” (HERI, 1996, p. 10)

Goals of the Social Change Model

The SCM focuses on two primary goals:

1. To enhance student learning and development; more specifically, to develop in each student participant greater:
 - ♦ **Self-knowledge:** understanding one's talents, values, and interests, especially as these relate to the student's capacity to provide effective leadership.
 - ♦ **Leadership competence:** the capacity to mobilize oneself and others to serve and work collaboratively.
2. To facilitate positive social change at the institution or in the community. That is, undertake actions which will help the institution/community to function more effectively and humanely. (HERI, 1996, p. 19)

Introducing the Seven C's

The SCM includes seven dimensions or values, referred to throughout the book as the "Seven C's," that synergistically become leadership for social change. These values are Citizenship, Collaboration, Common Purpose, Controversy with Civility, Consciousness of Self, Congruence, and Commitment. All seven values work together to accomplish the transcendent C of Change. These values are grouped into three interacting clusters or dimensions: societal/community, group, and individual. The *societal* or *community dimension* is presented as Citizenship. *Group values* include Collaboration,

Common Purpose, and Controversy with Civility. *Individual values* include Consciousness of Self, Congruence, and Commitment.

The Ensemble

The Social Change Model was developed by a team of leadership educators and scholars who have worked extensively with college students. Funded by an Eisenhower Grant from the U.S. Office of Education in 1993–1996, the team realized early in the process that, like a good jazz ensemble, every member's contributions were essential, energy could flow among members of the group, and the whole was greater than the sum of its parts. They named themselves "The Working Ensemble" to reinforce the value of the whole.

The ensemble was concerned that college students needed to value collective action for social change and to learn to work with others in socially responsible ways. The ensemble was further concerned that old paradigms of leadership emphasized only the role of the positional leader and not the process of leadership among participants. Grounded in the belief that leadership capacity can be developed by anyone, the ensemble developed this values-based model that focused on how individuals can work effectively with others toward shared social concerns.

The model developed during a two-year process, including a weekend retreat with students from a diverse range of colleges and universities.

THE SCM BOOK PROJECT

The primary publication of the ensemble was a guidebook (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996) designed for the use of leadership educators. This guidebook is available from the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs (NCLP; www.nclp.umd.edu). The guidebook was often used as a textbook for students but needed to be updated and reframed for undergraduate college students who might be studying leadership and seeking to develop their own effective leadership perspective and practices. Professor Susan R. Komives, a member of the original ensemble and scholarship editor for the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs, challenged her graduate class of leadership educators in the College Student Personnel Program at the University of Maryland to research what college students needed to learn about leadership and to design and write a book that could be used as a text to teach about the Social Change Model. Leadership educator and former coordinator of the NCLP, Wendy Wagner joined Komives to write and edit this book.

Purpose of the SCM Book

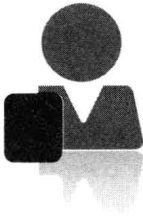
Nearly every college or university acknowledges that its graduates *can*, *will*, and, indeed, *must* be active leaders in their professions, their communities, and their world. Colleges expect their graduates to make this a better world. College students consistently affirm that they want their lives to matter and to

make a difference (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007). College seniors seek jobs in which they can do well *and* do good (Levine & Cureton, 1998).

This book is both a call to action and a framework for developing your capacity to work with other people as you engage in leadership to address shared purposes. The book encourages raising awareness of social issues that need attention and ways of being with each other that promote effectively addressing those issues.

Alexander Astin (2001), co-facilitator of the ensemble who developed the Social Change Model of Leadership, observes that

American higher education has traditionally defined a “student leader” either as someone who occupies a formal student office (e.g., student body vice-president or editor of the student paper) or as someone who has achieved visibility on the campus by virtue of athletic or some other form of achievement. This rather narrow approach not only relegates most students to the role of “non-leader,” but also creates an implicit “leader-follower” hierarchy, which, in the minds of most students, greatly limits their notions of who can or should “lead.” The great power of the non-hierarchical approach to student leadership that characterizes this book is that it expands the number of potential “student leader” to include virtually all students, while simultaneously transforming the *process* by means of which leadership is exercised on campus. (p. x)



In this book, the term *leader* is used without regard to a specific role in a group—whether as a positional leader or a participant engaging in the leadership process as a group member.

We believe—and research supports—that leadership can be learned and that the capacity to engage in leadership with others can be developed (Dugan & Komives, 2007). This journey into deeper leadership is facilitated by action (practicing leadership and engaging with others) and by reflection (thinking about your experiences and making meaning about your observations). This action and reflection cycle is the heart of experiential learning (Dewey, 1923; Kolb, 1981). This cycle expands the individual's capacity to learn more effective ways of thinking about and engaging in leadership.

An old Hindu proverb says, "There is nothing noble about being superior to some other (person). The true nobility is in being superior to your previous self." Psychologist Carl Rogers' (1961) concept of *On Becoming a Person* validates the exploration of one's own experiences as the most potent source of knowledge for personal development.

Experience is, for me, the highest authority. The touchstone of validity is my own experience. No other person's ideas, and none of my own ideas, are as authoritative as my experience. It is to experience

that I must return again and again, to discover a closer approximation to truth as it is in the process of becoming in me. Neither the Bible nor the prophets—neither Freud nor research—neither the revelations of God nor man—can take precedence over my own direct experience. (p. 23)

The processes of *becoming* something—becoming collaborative, becoming congruent, becoming a change agent—move one from an uninformed consciousness about that awareness to a more informed consciousness able to examine the previous way of being in this *process of becoming* (Kegan, 1994).

In *On Becoming a Leader*, former university president and noted leadership scholar Warren Bennis (1989) wrote, “To become a leader, then you must become yourself, become the maker of your own life” (p. 40). Each of the chapters of this book asks you to reflect on how you are becoming the specific leadership dimension being presented. Think about the journey toward becoming more conscious of your effectiveness with that leadership value. Indeed, developing each of these leadership values, attitudes, and skills is a journey—the “becoming” process.

Focus of the Book

The ensemble and authors of this book focus on social change and socially responsible actions that readers can take to make the world a better place for everyone. The book is comprised

of five parts. Part One sets the foundation by exploring what social change means and presents the SCM. Parts Two through Four present the three key dimensions of the model and the values they contain. Part Five challenges you to think about yourself as a change agent.

Part One includes Chapters One through Four. Chapter One explores the common social problems that people share and some of the processes used to address them. We encourage the reader to think deeply and personally about issues that need shared attention and how people can work collaboratively toward those changes. Chapter Two describes and provides an overview of the Social Change Model of Leadership Development. Chapter Three introduces three case studies of college students who are facing shared challenges and demonstrates how the elements of the model inform effective ways to accomplish change in each of those cases. Two of the cases are then continued in each of the rest of the chapters of the book, so readers can apply the content of that chapter to the evolving cases. The SCM is all about change; Chapter Four looks at change as a concept, how individuals and groups can lead for change, and why change may be resisted.

We encourage all readers to read the four chapters in Part One of the book in sequence, from understanding of the need for social change, to how the SCM proposed addressing this change, to what change is about.

Parts Two through Four delve into the seven values (the Seven C's) of the model grouped into three dimensions.

Although these values can be examined in any order, we encourage reading them in the order presented. In Part Two, the dimension of societal/community explores the value of citizenship along with how communities work for change. Part Three focuses on the group dimension of social change, specifically Collaboration (Chapter Six), Common Purpose (Chapter Seven), and Controversy with Civility (Chapter Eight). Finally, Part Four presents the values on the individual level, which include the importance of having Consciousness of Self (Chapter Nine), Congruence (Chapter Ten), and Commitment (Chapter Eleven) in order to be effective in working with others to make change happen.

Part Five puts all this together; Chapter Twelve discusses becoming a change agent. The Epilogue ends the book by encouraging the reader to become a person who will have the courage to make this a better world. Additional resources on the SCM are also included at the end of the book.

Personal Reflection

Encouraging personal reflection is an essential aspect of this book. As Carl Rogers (1961) affirmed, one is always “becoming,” and the journey into effective leadership is a process of enhancing, improving, informing, and becoming. Deeper learning in leadership (Roberts, 2007) only happens through experiential learning and personal reflection. Each chapter in the book encourages the reader to reflect on the material through discussion questions and journal probes. The

discussion questions focus your thinking on how the material relates to your experience and may be used in a class conversation to explore those topics. The journal probes relate to the process of becoming more competent with the material in the chapter. Kolb's (1981) model of experiential learning also frames the journal probe questions in each chapter. Readers are encouraged to think about Kolb's cyclical model of *concrete experience* (engaging with others or doing something), followed by *reflective observation* (thinking about what happened and why it happened—trying to make meaning from the experience). That reflection is followed by *abstract conceptualization* (creating a general principle, theory, or hypothesis based on the experience), then *active experimentation* (using this theory in new situations and seeing if it explains what is happening or helps things improve). Intentionally engaging in these reflections should enrich each reader's experience with becoming a more effective leader for social change.

Our Collaborative Process

The chapters in this book were a true collaborative process between and among authors and editors. Most chapters contain some material or ideas collaboratively generated by other team members. The lead author for each chapter deserves authorship credit for the chapter and gratefully acknowledges how the team enriched and improved the concepts and material throughout the book.

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