



Project MORE

2024 CAPSTONE PROJECT

For Mentees



PRESIDENTIAL CONSULTANTS

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Congratulations on participating in Project MORE and being selected as a mentee! The capstone is a key part of this program, allowing you to apply your skills, drive meaningful change, and grow your leadership abilities. This experience will enhance your professional growth and development while making a significant impact on our organization and community.

Capstone Project Detailed Instructions:

1. Identify Servant Leadership Traits Of A Former Mentor

- During our retreat, you identified someone (colleague, peer mentor, supervisor, manager, or teacher) who significantly helped you during a developmental period in your life or career.
- You wrote down on post-it notes the three characteristics, traits, or values you admired most about that person.
- You matched those three characteristics, traits, or values with the 10 characteristics of servant leadership. **See the complete 10 Characteristics of Servant Leadership with descriptions on pages 3 and 4 [BELOW](#).**

2. Choose One Servant Leader Characteristic To Intentionally Grow

- Identify one characteristic of servant leadership from the three you matched that you want to intentionally grow in yourself.
- Choose the one you are most interested in, most inspired by, or is simply your favorite. The specific choice is up to you.

3. Develop A Work-Related Personal Project

- Using your selected Servant Leadership Characteristic, apply the GROWS framework to create a work-related personal project for your capstone to complete over the next year.
- This project should:
 - Advance your role - Ensure your project aligns with your position and doesn't divert you from your core job responsibilities.
 - Challenge you to grow - Choose a project that requires you to improve or develop new skills, pushing you to stretch in some way.
 - Make an impact on your personal and/or career development - Select a project whose results would create meaningful and lasting benefits for your personal and/or professional growth.

4. Input your information on the GROWS template on pages 5-10 below, save this editable PDF file. Then, **email a copy of this completed file to our Project Manager, Rickita Johnson at partnerships@presidentialconsultants.com NO LATER THAN Friday, June 7, 2024** for review and support from the coaching team.

Ten Characteristics of a Servant Leader

LISTENING

The servant leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps to clarify that will. He or she listens receptively to what is being said and unsaid. Listening also encompasses hearing one's own inner voice. Listening, coupled with periods of reflection, is essential to the growth and well-being of the servant leader.

EMPATHY

The servant leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits. One assumes the good intentions of co-workers and colleagues and does not reject them as people, even when one may be forced to refuse to accept certain behaviors or performance.

HEALING

The healing of relationships is a powerful force for transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of servant leadership is the potential for healing one's self and one's relationship to others. Although this is a part of being human, servant leaders recognize that they have an opportunity to help make whole those with whom they come in contact.

AWARENESS

General awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader. Awareness helps one in understanding issues involving ethics, power, and values. It lends itself to being able to view most situations from a more integrated, holistic position.

PERSUASION

Another characteristic of servant leaders is reliance on persuasion, rather than on one's positional authority, in making decisions within an organization. The servant leader seeks to convince others, rather than coerce compliance. The servant leader is effective at building consensus within groups.

CONCEPTUALIZATION

Servant leaders seek to nurture their abilities to dream great dreams. The ability to look at a problem or an organization from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities. For many leaders, this is a characteristic that requires discipline and practice. The leader who wishes to also be a servant leader must stretch his or her thinking to encompass broader-based conceptual thinking. Servant leaders are called to seek a delicate balance between conceptual thinking and a day-to-day operational approach.

FORESIGHT

Closely related to conceptualization, the ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation is hard to define, but easier to identify. One knows foresight when one experiences it. Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant leader to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision for the future.

STEWARDSHIP

Peter Block (1993)—author of *Stewardship and The Empowered Manager*—has defined stewardship as “holding something in trust for another”. Servant leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others. It also emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion, rather than control.

COMMITMENT TO THE GROWTH OF PEOPLE

Servant leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. As such, the servant leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within his or her organization. The servant leader recognizes the tremendous responsibility to do everything in his or her power to nurture the personal and professional growth of employees and colleagues.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

The servant leader seeks to identify a means for building community among those who work within a given institution. Servant leadership suggests that true community can be created among those who work in businesses and other institutions.

Character and Servant Leadership: Ten Characteristics of Effective, Caring Leaders

Author: Larry C. Spears | Journal: Journal of Virtues & Leadership | Issue: 1 Volume: 1 Year: 2010

GROWS Template

Your Name _____

Which of the Characteristics of Servant Leadership did you choose to grow?

Why did you choose this characteristic?

How do you imagine that growing this Characteristic of Servant Leadership would impact you personally and/or professionally?

Thinking about the Servant Leadership characteristic you selected and how you could use it, begin on page 6 to utilize the GROWS model in crafting a meaningful work-related personal project for your Capstone over the next year.

Refer to pages 12-16 of this document for the full GROWS model description to assist in completing your responses.

For additional support, refer to 'Anthony's Example' on pages 9 and 10 of this document.

G = Goal (Aspirational Vision - What WOULD it look like)

In the space below, enter an overarching goal or vision for the project. It should be aspirational and inspiring.

R = Reality (Where We Are Today - What DOES it look like)

In the space below, provide an accurate and balanced assessment of the current situation, highlighting both strengths and weaknesses.

O = Options (Opportunities and Obstacles)

In the space below, brainstorm various options, considering innovative solutions, alternative approaches, opportunities, and potential hurdles and barriers.

W = Way Forward / Work Plan

In the space below, outline the way forward or work plan. Translate options selected into a structured action plan, detailing steps, milestones, and timelines.

S = Support/Advocacy

In the space below, detail the support and advocacy you require. Think about who you need and how you can leverage resources to achieve the goal.

If you take on this work-related personal project, would it:

- ☐ allow you to utilize the Servant Leadership characteristic you selected?
- ☐ advance your current role without distracting you from your main job duties?
- ☐ require you to stretch and develop new skills?
- ☐ make an impact on your personal and/or career development?

(Check all that apply)

What are you most excited about for this work initiative or project?

Anthony's GROWS Example

GOAL:

I aim to become more persuasive to inspire action and advocate effectively for both clients and workers. By developing my persuasive communication skills, I will foster a more supportive and collaborative workplace where everyone feels heard and valued. This will empower my clients to make positive changes in their lives and enhance my ability to advocate for my colleagues.

Additionally, building this skill will enable me to encourage community involvement in fostering and advocating for children in need, significantly impacting their safety, permanency, and well-being. Achieving this goal will advance my career and personal development, helping me become a more effective leader and better advocate within the organization.

REALITY:

Currently, my approach tends to be authoritative and enforcement-focused. While this method sometimes achieves compliance, it rarely fosters genuine buy-in or engagement from others. People may follow directives, but they do so out of obligation rather than motivation. This approach limits collaboration and stifles open communication, preventing the development of a truly cohesive and committed team. Moreover, clients and colleagues may feel disconnected and undervalued, hindering their willingness to contribute meaningfully and engage with our initiatives.

OPTIONS (Obstacles & Opportunities):

To address this issue, I will explore courses on persuasive communication to help me articulate my ideas more effectively with empathy and collaboration. I also plan to volunteer for the agency's speakers bureau. This will allow me to hone and practice my persuasive communication skills.

Furthermore, I want to learn empathetic communication strategies by engaging in training programs and seeking mentorship. I acknowledge the challenges of overcoming biases, assumptions, and managing my assertive personality. Despite these obstacles, I know that I am dedicated to my growth and development which is my greatest opportunity.

WAY FORWARD/WORK PLAN:

To move forward, I decided on a 3-part comprehensive work plan:

Invest in Education: I will enroll in the 5-hour “Persuasive Communication at Work” course at Cuyahoga Community College to improve my ability to express ideas clearly and effectively. The course begins next month.

Volunteer for the Speakers Bureau: I will commit to participating in two speaking engagements per month for the next year. To prepare for the speaking engagements, I will participate in the optional training program (4-hours for two Saturday’s) and invest an additional 4-hours on two additional Saturday’s studying the course material, practicing and developing talking points. I will reach out for additional coaching from my mentor, Dan, all within the next three months.

Engage with Peer Mentors: I have identified and requested support from two peer mentors within the agency who both excel in persuasive, collaborative, and empathetic communication. I will commit to bi-monthly briefings with these mentors through emails, coffee breaks, and quarterly lunches over the next year.

Support/Advocacy:

I am actively seeking additional support from my supervisor and our deputy director. I am clear about the specific areas where I want to grow, and I feel comfortable advocating for myself with both my supervisor and the deputy director. Expressing gratitude for the assistance I receive, I reciprocate by providing support to my supervisors and colleagues in return.



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GROWS Model

The **GROWS Model** serves as a structured roadmap for individuals or teams embarking on the journey of goal-setting and achievement. This framework comprises five essential components, each playing a pivotal role in navigating the path towards attaining desired outcomes.



G = Goal (Aspirational Vision - What **WOULD** it look like)

In the Goal stage of the **GROWS Model**, you envision an idealized state, transcending the confines of a typical SMART goal. It represents the pinnacle of achievement, painting a picture of what the world would look like if everything aligned perfectly with our highest values and aspirations. This aspirational vision serves as a North Star, guiding you towards a future characterized by fulfillment, impact, and excellence. It encapsulates not only tangible outcomes but also intangible qualities such as harmony, justice, and well-being. By daring to dream beyond the boundaries of the achievable, the Goal stage inspires bold action and fosters a sense of purpose that goes beyond mere objectives.

Questions to consider:

- What is the ultimate outcome you desire to achieve in this endeavor?
- What inspires you about this goal, and how does it resonate with your sense of purpose?
- How will reaching this goal positively impact those around you or your broader community?
- What emotions arise when you envision yourself successfully achieving this goal?
- How does achieving this goal contribute to your personal or professional growth?



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R = Reality

(Where We Are Today - What DOES it look like)

In the **Reality phase**, you confront the present situation with clarity and objectivity. This entails a sober assessment of your current state, acknowledging both strengths and limitations. By confronting reality head-on, you gain insight into the gap between the aspirational vision and the actual circumstances. This self-awareness forms the basis for strategic decision-making and action planning, ensuring that your efforts are grounded in a realistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities at hand.

Questions to consider:

- What is the current situation or state of affairs related to your goal?
- What strengths and resources do you currently possess that can support progress towards your goal?
- What feedback or insights have you received from others regarding the current situation?
- Are there any blind spots or areas of uncertainty that need to be addressed in understanding the current reality?
- How does the current reality align with your initial expectations or assumptions about pursuing this goal?



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O = Options

(Opportunities and Obstacles)

Questions to consider:

The Options stage of the **GROWS Model** encompasses not only opportunities but also obstacles. In addition to generating innovative solutions and alternative approaches, you must also anticipate potential hurdles and barriers. This involves identifying obstacles, whether they be internal or external factors, individuals, or circumstances that could impede progress towards the aspirational goal. By proactively addressing these challenges and integrating mitigation strategies into your options, you fortify your resilience and enhance your chances of success. Embracing a holistic perspective that acknowledges both opportunities and obstacles enables you and your team to navigate complexity with agility and foresight.

- What are different approaches or strategies you could take to move closer to your goal?
- How can you leverage your strengths and resources to maximize opportunities for achieving the goal?
- Are there alternative perspectives or viewpoints that could offer new insights or possibilities?
- Are there any assumptions or biases that may be limiting your exploration of alternative options?
- What potential obstacles or barriers do you foresee, and how might you overcome them?
- What potential risks or drawbacks should be considered when evaluating each option?
- How can creativity and innovation be harnessed to explore unconventional options for reaching the goal?
- How can you prioritize your options based on their feasibility, impact, and alignment with your values?



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W = Way Forward / Work Plan

With a comprehensive understanding of both opportunities and obstacles, the Way Forward stage focuses on translating options into a structured plan of action. This entails delineating specific steps, milestones, and timelines necessary to bridge the gap between the current reality and the aspirational goal. By breaking down the journey into manageable tasks and allocating resources effectively, you and your team establish a clear roadmap for progress. This work plan fosters accountability and momentum, guiding you towards the realization of your vision with purpose and determination.

Questions to consider:

- What specific steps can you take to progress towards your goal?
- How will you prioritize tasks and allocate resources to ensure effective execution of your plan?
- What milestones or checkpoints will help you track progress and stay on course?
- What contingency plans can you put in place to address unforeseen obstacles or setbacks?
- What strategies can you employ to maintain motivation and momentum during the implementation phase?
- How will you communicate your work plan and expectations to stakeholders or team members?
- How will you celebrate achievements and milestones along the way to keep morale high?



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S = Support/ Advocacy

Questions to consider:

Finally, the Support/Advocacy stage emphasizes the importance of fostering a supportive environment to sustain progress and overcome obstacles. This involves mobilizing allies, cultivating partnerships, and leveraging resources to bolster resilience and fortify resolve. By nurturing a network of support and advocating for your needs, you enhance your capacity to navigate challenges and seize opportunities. Additionally, self-advocacy plays a crucial role, empowering you to assert your priorities and well-being throughout the journey. By embracing support and advocacy as integral components of the process, you foster a culture of collaboration and empowerment that fuels your collective journey towards realizing your aspirational vision.

- Who are the key stakeholders or allies that can provide support and guidance throughout your journey?
- How can you cultivate a network of support to help you navigate obstacles and setbacks?
- In what ways can you advocate for your needs and priorities to ensure they are met?
- What resources or tools are available to assist you in achieving your goal, and how can you access them?
- How can you create a sense of community or belonging among those involved in pursuing the goal?
- What role can mentorship or coaching play in providing guidance and encouragement throughout the process?
- What boundaries or self-care practices will help you maintain balance while seeking support?
- How will you communicate your appreciation and gratitude for the support you receive along the journey?