**Leadership Portfolio & Reflection**

**CYUZUZO Nicole**

**Leadership Reflection**

1. **The Learning Experiences and How they Transformed me**

My formal education, professional and informal learning experiences have transformed my personality. My academic journey at the African Leadership University (ALU) has been an opportunity for exposure and to discover my personality. Since high school, I was entrusted with coordinating twenty girls living in my family, initiated the project of assisting vulnerable families neighboring my school, and coordinated sports teams. After my graduation, I coordinated youth in my sector in community services. During my internship, I was entrusted with different responsibilities that connected me with people from various categories, and improved my professional maturity.

They helped me understand my weaknesses, values, motivations, and strengths, and seek feedback from my peers and mentors to encourage good work done. I learned to manage my emotions, especially in frustrating situations, improving how I schedule personal time to maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life, which was a huge challenge in my daily life.

This experience allowed me to redefine my perceptions of leadership and showed that great leaders are not born but made through constant thought, learning, and adaptation. As a result, I learned how to build strong relationships fast, demonstrate empathy, and improve my active listening. I learned to communicate persuasively in various situations and developed my capacity to listen to the other side non-judgmentally.

1. **What specific instances have you applied leadership theories to your learning journey?**

I applied leadership theories in family and youth coordination, which have been significant instances. I learned that leadership theories were not a theory but a fundamental tool, and can help me with what I was doing, primarily, transformative leadership.

The ideas were used in my youth group, where we created a mushroom project for the most vulnerable people in my cell. I used it to encourage and motivate individuals and teams to achieve their full potential, and learned to be patient about their failures. I conducted consistent coaching, emphasized influence creativity, and acknowledged the individual contributions of others.

That way, my example of being more directive in dealing with high-pressure assignments, wherein the deadline had to be met, could prove this point because I ensured that the roles were fully defined and the priorities were set.

On the other hand, I used a participatory approach when discussing or engaging in creative planning, when I left everyone free to participate in generating ideas. Nevertheless, these experiences demonstrated that a good leader cannot be rigid but must be flexible and adaptable to the needs of the team and the situation. That is why my mission project is a kind of that, and does not lack in the balance between creativity in the sphere of fashion designing and rigidity of the event’s organization.

1. **Evaluation of my Learning Journey, and how it transformed my Skills, Knowledge, and Mindset**.

Throughout my academic journey at ALU, I learned to conduct a self-assessment of my experiences that helps ascertain a clear line of development that extends beyond academic data and incorporates a personal development experience. More importantly, I connected my perceptions of leadership and power. I understood it as an influential, responsible, and service-oriented act. This shift of attitude is one of the most important changes that occurred to me.

Concerning skills acquisition, I have developed into a much better communicator, since I learnt to describe ideas and make them sound persuasive, and how to approach this or that group of people. This skill set improved my organizational and problem-solving skills, particularly in tasks that required the capacity to foresee difficulties and create innovative solutions. I learned more about the theories of leadership and their application, entrepreneurship, and innovation in new industries.

Finally, though, my mentality is embracing the power and the ability to adapt. I have been taught to view failures and setbacks as opportunities to grow. Such a change will allow me to manage all uncertainties and difficulties in developing the Rwanda fashion industry and provide quality event management services.

1. **Relationship between My Learning Journey, Gained Insights, Artefacts, and my Post-graduate Plans**

My learning experience, academic skills, and my mission project are all interconnected with each other. My artefacts, such as field reports, internships, and mission project development, prove that I did get an opportunity to find the right balance between theory and practice.

Every artefact is part of development, and it is essential to know how to plan and execute the process at the onset of the plan and understand how to unite innovation, collaboration, and responsibility. These works will form the foundation of my systems and methods.

My mission is directly connected to my learning, particularly in transformational and situational leadership. To create the market of Rwandan fashion, I will demonstrate to the young fashion designers and event professionals the vision of quality and explain what sort of systems would be efficient and could pass any test of time.

I must learn to be adaptable, creative, and precise to provide superior event management services. My post-graduate ambition would be to open my hub to offer significant events, teach, and hire young females to be good performers in the creative industries. As a result, I have not been learning solely from my academic preparation but also from the driver of my mission. I have studied an example of how vision-setting, teamwork, and resilience can be instrumental in the organization and planning of small-scale cultural events throughout my studies. These events were to be budgeted and planned, but still be flexible and creative.