Leadership Reflection

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The Leadership Trait Questionnaire highlighted three major strengths for me: Diligent, Dependable, and Empathic. I certainly agree with these strengths, as these are all traits that I strive to exhibit on a daily basis. In my current role as a Bone Marrow Transplant Coordinator, I am working to coordinate care between a number of different parties, including the patient, doctors, and insurance agencies. Insurance companies and doctors can be very difficult to get ahold of and thus I need to be very persistent when dealing with them so that the patient is able to get the care they need, as soon as possible. Furthermore, I need to be dependable because other nurses are relying on me to help their patient get set up with bone marrow transplants. If I was not dependable, then other nurses would not be as willing to work with me and would choose to find other institutions or coordinators to refer patients to. Lastly, I have always strived to be a strong advocate for my patients. A big part of this is being empathic and gaining a true understanding of what their situation is and how you can best help them out. Outside of these three main traits, my leadership style can also be characterized as trustworthy and sensitive.

Arguably my greatest strength is that I am concerned with how my decisions affect the lives of others. Anytime I get a new patient I try to get to know them on a personal level and put myself in their shoes so that I can have a better idea of what they are going through and what their needs are. This helps me gain their respect and helps build a level of trust that makes our time together more effective and enjoyable for both of us. While I view this as a strength, I also find that sometimes I get too invested in my individual patients’ and can be emotionally impacted when patients’ care does not go well. One area of growth I have is my self-confidence. I often find myself second guessing myself and thinking back on decisions I make, questioning whether I was right. This adds a lot of stress to my job and leads to me wasting time questioning past decisions instead of just moving on to new problems at hand. Improving my self-confidence would help reduce my stress levels and impact my productivity since I would not waste time second guessing myself or others.

I can learn better leadership skills by identifying strong leaders that I work with and making an effort to get to know them outside of work and ask them to help mentor me on how to be a better leader. For instance, I really admire the leadership style of the lead APP who oversees my department. She has been at Rush for a long time and has had many different roles, including nurse and nurse practitioner. All this experience has helped turn her into a great leader, who would be the perfect person to emulate and learn from. Currently our relationship is strictly professional, but I could make an effort to get to know her personally and see if she would be willing to draw on her experiences to help me identify ways to improve and develop as a leader.

During my time in this course I want to improve my ability to facilitate the work of a diverse team. I often find myself taking on too much work myself, because I don’t feel comfortable allocating work out to others, especially when they don’t work for me. In many cases, it makes perfect sense that someone else should do a specific aspect of the work, but I don’t always feel comfortable stepping into that manager type role and assigning tasks out. This is a crucial skill as I continue to gain more responsibility in my role as a BMT Coordinator – as the work piles up I will need to be comfortable allocating it out to others so that we can work more effectively. “Nurse leaders in today’s health care organization must be skilled group facilitators with an exquisite ability to manage and lead the collective work of people.” (Source). I need to become a stronger facilitator to improve the overall wellbeing of my department and to ensure I succeed in future lead roles I take on.