

Leadership Foundations:
**Edward Jenner Programme: My Leadership
Development Journey**

by Ng Rui Jie

Submitted to the NHS Leadership Academy
for the award of LEADERSHIP FOUNDATIONS

Edward Jenner programme : Launch and Foundations
NHS Leadership Academy
August 2019

1. Key learning point(s)

The learning in the course help me to develop my leadership qualities and get me prepared to take up greater responsibilities in the near future. Honestly, I was not taught much about the knowledge of healthcare leadership and management during my medical education in the university. This online course is highly relevant as it is not just a generic leadership course but is tailored to the healthcare settings.

Throughout this course, there are so many key learning points that I was exposed to. I am now able to tell what makes a leader different from a manager. Another thing that I learnt is about distributed leadership. The concept is new to me as often we have a rigid organisation structure and practise a culture of high level of power distance. Lastly, I also try to practise in my daily life by being a good listener after realising its importance and how to influence others effectively and positively.

2. Background and setting

I am a medical doctor currently working in the research and training institute. Often, I have to lead my team in conducting research project from the planning, data collection and analysis phase till stakeholders' presentation and publication. As a result of this programme, I feel that I have gained more confidence in leading the team. I am now able to convey my thoughts and vision clearer and more convincingly. I have also improved in delegating tasks to my team members while at the same time bringing the best out of them by recognising their individual talents and potential. By applying emotional intelligence, I am now better equipped in managing conflicts in the workplace too.

3. Your actions

I am grateful that I am able to implement the learning in practice with the help of my superiors who served as my mentors and role models. As they are already holding leadership positions, often they are able to provide me with real-life advice and guidance based on their own experience. My colleagues who are aware that I am taking this leadership programme also provide me with constructive feedback at regular intervals, telling me how much I have improved and on what areas I may need to strengthen further. As I am joining this leadership programme together with other course members, we often gather and discuss what we have learnt and understand from the programme. We would also give words of encouragement and motivate each other to push for the change we hope to see in ourselves.

The main challenge that I face was trying to change and move away from my usual practice. I had to confess that it takes a lot of perseverance and determination in trying to practise what were learnt and incorporate them into daily life. It is never easy stepping out from one's comfort zone.

4. Effects of the change

I feel that the relationship between my team members and I have improved. I organised an open discussion for the whole team to voice out our opinions on each other, our views on the current working environment, our goals and vision, and our priorities. We have never had such sessions before. After the discussion, we found that the whole team was on agreement for most of the issues, with some differences that we manage to sort out or find common ground. This indirectly increases our productivity level as now we have clearer and common goals, everyone knows better what is the role that they are expected play, as well as what are the strengths and weaknesses of each other.

5. Lessons learned

I certainly hope that I could have better time management while completing the Edward Jenner programme. I had a rather hectic schedule soon after I registered for the programme. On top of that, I was away for six weeks as I attended a summer school programme overseas. I think having continuation and being able to focus in going through the programme would yield a bigger impact in the leadership development. My advice to others who are considering signing up for the programme would be to do it in a group rather than individually. Having others registering and going through the programme together would give us the extra motivation to complete the programme on time, to practice what have been learnt, and to pursue the change we hope to see in ourselves. Group discussion can also be organised which would help in understanding the lessons taught.

6. Next steps

I would continue getting advice and guidance from my superiors who also act as my mentor in my leadership development journey. They are often very helpful and generous in sharing their knowledge and would always provide me with opportunities to hone my leadership skills. The constructive feedback given could also guide me on how to further improve my leadership qualities. Besides that, even after this programme, I am sure my group members who have started this programme together with me will still be in touch with each other. As we are all working in different workplace, there would definitely be interesting and meaningful experience sharing when we meet up subsequently on how useful the lessons we learnt are as well as what the best methods to practise them are. Last but not the least, performing self-reflection at regular intervals to see how far we have progressed. After all, we are our own best judge. We should grab every opportunity that will help us grow and develop our leadership qualities.

Word count : 916