Reflection on Leadership Program Experience

On 15 Feb 2025, I had the opportunity to participate in a full-day leadership program from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Throughout the day, I attended multiple sessions that provided valuable insights into leadership, storytelling, active listening, and strategic planning. Each session contributed significantly to my understanding of leadership and personal development.

Keynote Presentation by Casey Cornelius (9:30 - 11:00 AM)

The program began with a keynote presentation by Casey Cornelius, who shared profound insights on leadership and personal growth. One of the most impactful takeaways was the phrase, "Choices reflect priorities." This statement resonated deeply, highlighting the idea that our decisions ultimately define what we value the most. Casey also emphasized that true caring begins where necessity ends, suggesting that genuine leadership extends beyond obligation, it involves intentional action and commitment. Another key insight was that relationships are not built on unending joy alone but require moments of challenge and authenticity. Additionally, he addressed the concept of "enthusiasm fatigue," where prolonged efforts without proper balance can lead to exhaustion. These ideas provided a strong foundation for the sessions that followed.

Session Block 1: Storytelling by Tim Littell (11:00 - 11:50 AM)

During the first session block, I attended the storytelling workshop in Discovery A, led by Tim Littell. This session focused on the power of storytelling in leadership, emphasizing how personal narratives can be used to inspire and motivate others. We explored how sharing our challenges and the ways we overcame them can create connections and foster resilience within a community. A notable reference was made to the themes of "Inspire, Connect, and Lead," which aligned with the principles showcased in the popular show Ted Lasso. This session reinforced the idea that effective leaders use their personal experiences to encourage and uplift those around them.

Session Block 2: Impact Mapping for Leaders by Gina Kuehler (1:00 - 1:50 PM)

After lunch, I attended the impact mapping session in Discovery B, facilitated by Gina Kuehler. This session focused on strategic planning and analyzing both the positive and negative aspects of initiatives. One key discussion revolved around identifying areas where Wright State University, particularly the Success Center, could improve in reaching and supporting students. We mapped out the benefits of enhanced student engagement and proposed actionable steps to bridge the gaps. The session underscored the importance of structured planning in leadership and demonstrated how impact mapping can be a valuable tool for achieving long-term success.

Session Block 3: Active Listening and Inclusion as a Leadership Tool by Tom Webb (2:00 - 2:50 PM)

In the third session, I participated in an active listening workshop in Atlantis A, led by Tom Webb. This session was particularly engaging as there were only three students, allowing for hands-on experience. We practiced different roles—speaker, listener, and observer—rotating through each to understand the nuances of active listening. It was a fun and interactive session that highlighted the significance of truly listening in leadership roles. The activity reinforced that effective leaders are not just great speakers but also attentive listeners who validate and understand the perspectives of others.

Closing Motivation by Susan Edwards (3:00 - 3:30 PM)

The program concluded with an inspiring session led by Susan Edwards, who delivered a powerful message on motivation and action. She encouraged us to take the insights gained from the day and apply them in our leadership journeys. Her closing remarks served as a reminder that leadership is not just about learning but also about implementing and making a meaningful impact.

Final Thoughts

Overall, this leadership program was an enriching experience that provided valuable lessons in decision-making, storytelling, strategic planning, active listening, and motivation. The insights from each session will be instrumental in shaping my approach to leadership, helping me to inspire, connect, and lead effectively in various aspects of life. I am grateful for the opportunity to have participated in such a well-structured and engaging program, and I look forward to applying these lessons in real-world scenarios.