

The Leadership Education Model

Creating a generation of innovators

Leadership education focuses on mentoring children to become their personal best, and to be prepared to lead future generations by motivating individuals, communities and nations toward a greater good.

Throughout recorded history, there have been three basic traditions of education. Nearly every system of education in history and modern times fits into one of these three models.

First, the 'conveyor belt' educational model teaches the masses basic literacy skills, helping to lift generations from poverty toward better lives and jobs.

Second, is the professional model, which trains 'experts' according to certain guidelines and methodologies that society has agreed upon. This way, teachers, doctors and other professionals have a definitive standard by which to be measured and qualified.

Third, is the *leadership education* model which trains thinkers, artists, inventors, leaders, entrepreneurs and statesmen. It focuses on 'how to think' instead of 'what to think'. This is the way that history's greats were taught - like Thomas Jefferson and Albert Einstein.

The leadership model relies on several key ingredients. These include the Phases of Learning, the 7 Keys of Leadership, the 5 Environments, Custom-Made Systems, the Arts of Responding and Inspiring, and the 3 Roles of Parents.

The Phases of Learning

1. Core Phase Birth to ~8yrs

During this phase children are allowed to be children and learn from the method that works best for them in developing imagination and creativity - unstructured play time with 'raw' materials (clay, dirt, sticks, rocks, paper, etc.)

They are also taught basic life skills and habits - cooking, cleaning, grooming - as well as values, ethics and basic social skills.

2. Love of Learning Phase ~8yrs to ~12yrs

During this stage children will develop an interest in 'learning' - picking an interest that they pursue passionately for some time until they drop it. They are encouraged to be curious without the requirements of a deeply intensive study. They are enjoying the journey of learning about a myriad of things, and 'practicing' at studying until they are mature enough to 'dig in'.

3. Scholar Phase ~12yrs to ~16yrs

This is when children/youth really begin the intense study or 'schooling' phase. The learner *willingly* undertakes long periods of intense study time in preparation for their life's mission. This is the time when they will seek mentors to push them beyond their limits and to their personal best.

4. Depth Phase ~16yrs to ~22yrs

At this stage, the learner goes into professional study as they pursue their 'life's mission' and does all that they can to prepare for fulfilling it.

When studying the great men and women of history, you will see that they follow a model that is very close to this, and are mentored by parents and others who also followed this model.

To learn more about the Phases, read *Leadership Education: The Phases of Learning*

The 7 Keys of Leadership

As parents, our job is to lead and inspire our children toward greatness. This can be accomplished by following the 7 Keys:

1. Classics, not Textbooks

Great ideas, well communicated, have incredible power. Great ideas are most effectively learned from the greatest thinkers, innovators, teachers and mentors of history.

The leadership model takes great ideas from *the source*, rather than from 2nd, 3rd or 4th interpretations of them presented in textbooks.

2. Mentors, not Professors

Professors and experts tell students what to learn, invites them to conform to certain standards and ideas, and then grades them on their performance.

The mentor assists the learner in pursuing their personal goals, and in discovering their talents, strengths and purpose.

3. Inspire, not Require

Probably the least understood, and the least practiced, but the *single most important element* in Leadership Education.

There are really only two ways to teach - either inspire the student to learn enthusiastically and voluntarily, or require them to meet your stipulations.

Most schools systems use the latter method. Mentors instead ask, "What can I do to inspire this student to develop a love of learning?"

4. Structure Time, not Content

Mentors help their students to establish a consistent schedule and to follow it, but they don't structure what will be learned during that structured time.

Establishing a routine, and providing an inspiring environment, will provide your children with an opportunity to learn. When the opportunity is available, and modeled, children will be eager to participate.

The 'structure' will be different depending on which of the Phases of Education the student is in.

5. Quality, not Conformity

The focus of a leadership education is not on how well a student conforms to 'grade level' requirements or how they measure up to test standards.

The focus in this model is how *well* the student does the work they choose to do. Are they giving it their best? Are they taking initiative? Are they experiencing personal growth?

Is their work simply 'regurgitating' what they've heard or been told by others? Or is it an expression of their creativity and original thinking?

6. Simplicity, not Complexity

When curriculum is complex, the student needs to rely on the teacher/expert to help them in understanding it. What this leads to is requirements and conformity instead of creativity and application - true education.

Great mentors, thinkers and leaders keep things simple. Read, write, discuss and apply.

7. YOU, not Them

The *leadership education* model only works when you focus, not on trying to *teach* your children, but on trying to *educate yourself*.

Children mimic. They copy and follow our examples. If we want them to read, they should see us reading, and we should read with them. If we want them to be leaders, then we need to model effective leadership.

By focusing on your own education, you're setting the example that your children will follow.

Read the classics. Write about them and discuss them with your children and spouse. Study, take a class to learn a new skill. Step out of your comfort zone.

By pursuing your own education, you won't have to force your kids to learn or study. It will be a natural desire, because they see their parents doing it.

The 5 Environments of Mentoring

The 5 Environments help a mentor/teacher to do their job, which is to inspire self-education.

1. Tutorial

This is when a mentor and 1-6 students discuss something they have all read (either together or separately).

This is not lecturing, but a discussion where all are involved. Tutoring can only happen when you have read and thought about a topic.

2. Group Discussion

Similar to Tutorial, this happens with larger groups, from 6-30 people. An example of this would be a book group.

Group discussions can be led by a moderator. It is nice to have a mix of youth and adults. Ensure that adults do not do all of the talking, even if silence ensues for several minutes.

3. Lecture

This is the most overdone 'environment', the kind most often used in 'conveyor belt' school systems.

It consists of one person talking while students take notes. It is not the best form for teaching, but if used effectively, with real experts, it can be beneficial.

4. Testing

Testing can also have a bad rep, because of the way it is misused in the 'conveyor belt'. But when done correctly, it is an important part of mentoring.

The point of testing is to examine what the student is acquiring and if they are able to communicate and apply their knowledge.

Multiple-choice and fill in the blank can only measure facts and trivia. Oral (for younger students) and essay (for older students) examinations are more effective because it allows the student to simply share what they have learned, adding the dimension of public performance, verbalization, and written skills.

5. Coaching

Coaching can be applied in all of the Environments of Mentoring - tutorial, group discussion, lecture and testing.

The coach helps to arrange the field trips, apprenticeships, music or other lessons, according to the child's interests.

The coach also helps in everyday life - discussing right and wrong, teaching basic skills, counseling and guiding.

The 3 Roles of Parents

Role #1: Develop, Nurture & Heal Family Relationships

The quality of teaching and education will improve as relationships improve. "If my teaching is consistently failing flat, the answer is not to teach more. That's often the temptation, but it's a mistake. When my teaching is failing, the solution is to build better relationships." ([Leadership Education](#), DeMille)

Instead of focusing most of our time and attention on the things that go wrong, practicing focusing on how to make things go right. Your primary job is to contribute to helping things go right. This sets the foundation for learning.

Role #2: Create an Inspiring Environment

Creating an inspiring environment does not mean that you have to be the source of all inspiration. It does not all rely on you.

What it does mean is that you should structure your surrounding environments so that they increase the likelihood and frequency that children will engage in learning activities.

To do this, use the 7 Keys of Leadership, and 5 Environments of Mentoring (see above), as well as Custom-Made Systems, and The Arts of Inspiring (see below).

Role #3: Respond Effectively to Your Children's Inspiration

When your children express a desire to learn about something, your job is to effectively respond.

When we successfully fill our first two Roles, our children will become eager and excited to learn. All we have to do then is respond effectually. To do so, follow the Four Arts of Responding Effectively (see below).

The Four Arts of Inspiring

1. The Art of Variety

Children are more likely to engage in learning when they are offered a variety of choices. This may include books, music, resources, art, things to see, hear and touch, places to visit and people to meet.

2. The Art of Exposure

Power comes from allowing children to engage in learning on their own terms and in their own way.

When they feel expected or forced to learn or be interested in something, they are less likely to be truly captivated.

A child who says, "Mom, I want to learn about that," will be more attentive than when Mom says, "Would you like to do that?"

Consistently, but gently, expose your children to new ideas, books, music and art. Then wait to see where things go from there.

3. The Art of the Dance

Learning opportunities can sometimes be lost when we begin to 'direct' things too fast. Instead, we need to create an atmosphere that feels safe and easy. Your interest as a parent should be evident, but not manipulative.

Engage them in the learning process, instead of forcefully directing them, just as you would if you were dancing together.

4. The Art of Being Inspired

As the parent, you can't inspire your children until you are first inspired. Determine which of the Four Phases of Learning you are in, and then dig deep into it. Study, read, learn, and then discuss with your children (casually and naturally) what you are learning.

Let your children see your passion for the knowledge and skills you are gaining.

You should also extend your interests to new horizons. Try new things. Delve into new topics and genres. It's time to breakout.

The Four Arts of Responding

1. The Art of Continuing the Dance

After you children have been inspired and engaged in learning, you may feel tempted to back off of the Four Arts of Inspiring. You might feel that your children will perpetually create the inspiration they need from now on.

Instead, what may happen is that after spending weeks studying a topic (art, for example), they may slowly begin to lessen their interest. This is the time when you re-spark that flame.

Take them to an art gallery, buy more art supplies, or create a painting of your own. Inspiring is still in your job description.

2. The Art of Engagement

Engagement means that you respond in the moment when the child expresses an initial interest.

The smallest spark of interest can lead to a journey of discovery, if you as the parent don't allow it to be snuffed out by inertia.

3. The Art of Preparation

Similar to designing a web page, the webmaster does a lot of work on the back end to make the front end look pretty and functional.

As parents, if we carefully prepare, we can be ready to respond when our children are ready to learn.

This might mean gathering resources (for projects) or simply planning the next day. Preparation helps us to capture and capitalize on our children's interests.

4. The Art of Integrity

This Art is simply about keeping the agreements you have with yourself and with your children.

If you have agreed to live by the 7 Keys of Leadership, then you'll have integrity when you stick by *Inspiring, not Requiring, Structure Time, not Content and Simplicity, not Complexity.*

Integrity means that you overcome the temptation to resort to the tactics you might know best - tactics that don't work and won't raise a generation of leaders.

We've been trained to believe that when it comes to 'important' things - like learning reading or math - that freedom doesn't work. Only compulsion will get the job done. The real challenge of Leadership Education is in trusting the process.

Integrity also means that we stick to our family routines - routines that support and build habits of learning - like reading as a family each night, and having time to study during the day.

Custom-Made Systems

Your home already has many systems. Some are default, and others have been specifically designed.

When pursuing the Leadership Education, it's critical to specifically design some Custom-Made Systems that will support and encourage the learning processes.

These are consciously created, with a defined objective in mind.

Some of these systems include:

1. Mornings
2. Devotionals
3. Chores
4. The Closet
5. The Six-Month Purge
6. The Six-Month Inventory
7. Scholar Contracts
8. Evenings
9. Winters

These systems require too much in-depth information to include here. To learn more about them, please read [Leadership Education: The Phases of Learning](#) Chapter Three

The Leadership Education Model

You can learn more about this model of education by reading the following books:

The Thomas Jefferson Education: Teaching a Generation of Leaders

Leadership Education: The Phases of Learning

The Thomas Jefferson Education Home Companion

The Student Whisperer