

TITLE: Personal Best Leadership Stories of Educational Administration Students

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OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this study was to analyze the leadership experiences of neophyte leaders who wished to become school administrators.

METHODOLOGY: One hundred beginning students in Educational Administration were asked to complete the Personal Best Leadership Questionnaire (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). Everyone in the sample was a practicing teacher and was beginning the master's course work necessary to become a principal.

KEY FINDINGS: The author reports that “even though Kouzes and Posner studied established business leaders and this study looked at neophyte leaders in education, many of the same patterns and themes can be defined” (p. 4). She concludes that “once beginning teachers accepted the role of leadership, they actively sought challenges and opportunities to make the vision a reality. Beginning or experienced leaders have a vision of the possibilities and are able to convince others of the rightness of the vision. Beginning leaders realize that leadership means you must have followers and that people willingly follow a leader. Followers are recognized as quality individuals who can be leaders in their own right, given the correct circumstances. Beginning leaders believe that they should be in the trenches working alongside the team. Leaders do not set themselves apart from the team. Beginning leaders found leadership to be both hard work and fun. Their apprehensions are overcome by small wins that lead to larger success. Leaders understand the importance of having a sense of humor and of recognizing the contributions of others” (pp. 8-9).