

Burchard, B. (2009). *The student leadership guide*. (4th ed). Garden City, NY: Morgan James Publishing.

Reviewed by Laura Riegger

Introduction

The Student Leadership Guide by Brendon Burchard (2009) uses Burchard's E⁶ framework to guide readers through what he considers to be some of the most important characteristics of leadership: envision, enlist, embody, empower, evaluate, and encourage. The book is written specifically to help college students understand the leadership process from both theoretical and practical viewpoints. Burchard aims to help students realize anyone has the ability to be a great leader regardless of their power or position. *The Student Leadership Guide* has a heavy focus on personal development and self-reflection to help readers determine exactly what leadership means to them.

Theoretical frame

The Student Leadership Guide is based on the theoretical frameworks of servant and transformational leadership. Both theories share the common thread of service being the root of leadership. Throughout the book, Burchard drives home the point that leaders need to serve the needs of their collaborators. Putting others first to promote a strong community is what servant leadership is all about and in order to further their development, leaders must strive to find out the needs and aspirations of their collaborators. A high level of integrity is a crucial component of effective leadership, therefore, leaders must practice what they preach to show their collaborators who they really are. Transformational leadership focuses on what leaders and collaborators can do together and how both parties can work towards a shared vision. In the book, Burchard really encompasses the ideas behind both theories and leaves readers with a well-rounded idea of how to use each of the outlined components.

Elements of the book

Introduction:

Burchard specifically outlines the difference between management and leadership because many individuals attempt to use the concepts interchangeably since those they consider "leaders" are frequently their managers or supervisors. In *The Student Leadership Guide*, leadership is described as a process based on influence and the pursuit of mutual purposes versus management, which involves one person directing others using a top-down hierarchy. To help readers understand their personal views on leadership and what it means to be a leader, Burchard includes a series of questions at the end of the introduction and asks readers to reflect and jot down a few notes before reading further.

Chapter 1: The Search for "Leadership"

The first chapter of *The Student Leadership Guide* dives into what leadership is and Burchard gives the definition of a leader as "a person engaged in, and who intends to consistently engage in, the leadership process." Therefore, leadership is best viewed as a process in which leaders and collaborators come together in an influential relationship and work towards a mutual purpose. In the past, leadership theorists have struggled to find a balance between task and relationship. Often when people think of leadership they associate it with relationship building

which causes people to lose sight of the overall purpose or task of the group. While building relationships is imperative to successful leadership, keeping the intended purpose at the forefront is just as important, which is why Burchard stresses the significance of seeing it as a process. To close the chapter, Burchard outlines his E⁶ framework, which consists of six activities he believes are necessary for leadership to be effective: envision, enlist, embody, empower, evaluate, and encourage. According to Burchard, “The framework of E⁶, like leadership itself, must ultimately lead to those you serve becoming stronger, wiser, empowered, and better cared for, and, most importantly, help them become leaders in their own right.”

Chapter 2: Envision

Chapter two outlines the importance of having a vision for the future and ideas on how to make it a reality. Readers will learn what a vision is, who develops it, and necessary guidelines for creating one. When it comes to the individual responsible for creation, a leader typically writes the preliminary vision by developing a personal vision. Once the leader has an understanding of their own ideas, they can begin working with their collaborators to find mutual ground and make sure their interests are being served. Student leaders are often required to build a vision from scratch and may feel overwhelmed. Listening to those around them and asking questions to find out what is missing or could be done better is the best place to start. To develop an effective vision leaders must assess both the present and future. Once the vision has been developed, leaders need to consider whom the vision needs to be shared with and how it will be communicated to those constituents. In this chapter, Burchard does a nice job of providing step-by-step guidance for leaders looking to develop a vision. Coming up with a vision statement is quite possibly the most daunting task for an emerging student leader, but this book provides a great breakdown of the necessary steps and makes the process seem more manageable.

Chapter 3: Enlist

In this chapter, readers will learn exactly how to find collaborators by clarifying their vision so it reflects a mutual purpose and by determining the best way to communicate that vision. Leaders must remember the vision of their collaborators is just as important as their own. This chapter helps leaders reshape the vision they developed in chapter two so it also reflects the desires of their collaborators. Leaders will serve three roles in this chapter, observer, facilitator, and analyst. As observers, leaders must actively listen to their collaborators and create a vision that shares a mutual purpose and the only way to discover that information is by getting to know the collaborators individually. As facilitators, leaders should bring their collaborators together in small groups to discuss the vision further. In this role, leaders should ask questions to find out what interests their collaborators have and where they want to go. Finally, leaders should play the role of analyst and develop a list of common themes from both individual and group discussions that can be compared to the current theme of the vision. The next step in the process is to communicate the vision to the larger group. Presentation of the vision is crucial and leaders need to prepare themselves for cynicism. Leaders are more likely to get support from collaborators by creating a sense of urgency for the proposed change and speaking with persuasiveness. Between the questions throughout the chapter and those provided at the end, Burchard again provides an easy to follow path for enlisting collaborators.

Chapter 4: Embody

Chapter four is dedicated to helping readers learn the importance of embodying their ideals, values, and the necessary level of commitment required to achieve a shared vision. This chapter is broken down into six short sections that will help readers consider how well they embody their message and effective ways to do so. To be effective, leaders must (1) know themselves, (2) gain expertise, (3) be a role model, (4) understand the importance of passion, (5) understand the need for consistency, and (6) recognize the importance of being a servant leader. To develop a more in depth awareness of self, leaders should do a self-assessment and self-inventory to understand their strengths and weaknesses. The next section, gaining expertise, discusses the importance of having a mastery of the material you are trying to convey to others. Leaders should be upfront about their abilities and level of knowledge. This section also provides questions for leaders to use that will help them determine their level of expertise. Being a role model is the next way leaders can show they embody what they say. A leader's values and visions become clear to collaborators through their behaviors and actions. Being passionate about the vision is extremely important and something leaders need to do on a daily basis. If collaborators do not see their leaders showing enthusiasm and support for the project they are not going to either. Consistency is also a critical component when it comes to embodying the vision. Collaborators must feel as though the leader is being consistent with their words and actions. Being a servant leader is the final step to showing true embodiment of the vision. Collaborators must feel as though their leaders are embodying ideals and values that will benefit and serve them. Burchard sums up this idea by saying, "The best leaders give other people the stage and seek to help them become better at what they do. They take care of them and build up their competence and confidence. They *serve* their people."

Chapter 5: Empower

In chapter five, Burchard outlines the significance of empowering collaborators by helping readers understand the importance of (1) education and training, (2) establishing participation, (3) shaping a supporting environment, and (4) rewarding and recognizing collaborators' efforts. In order to educate and train collaborators, leaders must keep them informed, create educational opportunities, and encourage risk, experimentation, and creativity. Training is important and allows people to expand their knowledge and apply new ideas and concepts to their everyday work. Since leadership is about mutual purposes, it only makes sense for leaders to encourage participation from their collaborators. True empowerment means giving collaborators the power to make decisions that will affect their lives. Shaping a positive environment is another way to promote empowerment in an organization. Leaders can create a positive environment by stressing the importance of community, building a high-trust culture, and promoting open communication. The final way to promote empowerment is through recognizing and rewarding participation. If leaders do not acknowledge the contributions of their collaborators, they will become discouraged and eventually give up. Individuals who are able to achieve such a goal are truly servants and transformational leaders. Burchard's delivery of the material is inspirational and the examples are easy to relate to many situations student leaders will encounter.

Chapter 6: Evaluate

As a leader, it is important to make sure you are on the correct path and heading in the right direction. Chapter six helps readers evaluate (1) the vision, (2) their ethics and performance, and

(3) their collaborators progress. This section outlines several questions to be used by leaders for reflective purposes in determining if the current vision is effective. After individual reflection, leaders should create a method such as a survey, interview, or focus group to assess whether people know about, believe in, and are taking actions on a daily basis to meet the espoused vision. Evaluating ethics and performance is also an important task because having strong ethics is one of the most important characteristics a leader should possess. In this chapter Burchard defines ethics from two different standpoints. The first addresses ethics from a human perspective, for example, how we treat each other on a daily basis. The second definition addresses ethics from a purpose standpoint and determines whether the actions we take on a daily basis are right or wrong. The chapter provides several examples and a series of questions to help leaders determine whether their actions, both from the human and purpose perspective, are ethical. Burchard aims to help leaders think about ethics from a broad perspective as opposed to their individual beliefs. Finally, the last section of this chapter addresses the need for leaders to evaluate their collaborators progress. This section is not meant to provide a set of guidelines for evaluating collaborators because it will vary based on the context. Instead it focuses on how to help leaders engage their collaborators as they evaluate them. The evaluation role can be challenging, but assessing the vision, ethics, and progress of collaborators is necessary to the overall success of a leader and the leadership process as a whole.

Chapter 7: Encourage

In the final chapter, Burchard discusses the importance of encouraging collaborators. There is no step-by-step guide in this chapter, but merely advice based on two personal experiences. As stated at the beginning of this review, leadership differs from management in many ways, one of those being the high importance leadership places on encouragement. According to Burchard, “Servant leaders seek to encourage collaborators’ uniqueness in the interest of helping them grow into healthier, wiser, freer, and more autonomous human beings.” Putting the interests and needs of collaborators first is what good leadership is all about and this can only be done through encouragement. Leaders do not encourage their collaborators just to get things accomplished, rather to bring out the best in them by proving they are capable.

Best target audience(s)

The Student Leadership Guide was written to help college students further develop their understanding of leadership and what it means to be a great leader. Emerging leaders would probably benefit most from this book; however, this is a great resource for college students regardless of their level of leadership experience. Even though students are the intended target audience, I think this book could be a beneficial resource for anyone looking to gain a better understanding of how to become a successful leader. *The Student Leadership Guide* would also be useful for individuals who work with college student leaders on a daily basis as it may provide tips and ideas to further their individual development.

Uses of book in practice

The Student Leadership Guide provides numerous discussion questions and opportunities for reflection, which makes this book a great tool for a leadership seminar, a leadership retreat, or as a resource for anyone interested in becoming a student leader on their campus. This would be a great book to have incoming first-year college students read over the summer prior to their

arrival. Several well-known student leaders could lead a discussion of the book and provide examples of leadership opportunities on campus.

Critique

The Student Leadership Guide was a quick read and the concepts were straightforward and easy to understand. Burchard did a great job of outlining the philosophies of Servant and Transformational Leadership by putting them into terms that were easy to understand. To gain the most out of the material, it is suggested to follow Burchard's advice and do the self-reflection questions at the beginning. Leadership is such a broad topic and the concepts can be difficult to grasp at times, however, through each chapter Burchard does a great job of breaking down the information. The Leadership-Self Check questions at the end of each chapter are possibly one of the most beneficial aspects of this book. Readers are asked to reflect on themselves and have their collaborators reflect on them as well. The questions should serve as a tool to evaluate your leadership, group, and created vision. While *The Student Leadership Guide* provided a lot of great information, it would have been nice to have examples that related more to college students. Burchard did not want to direct the book towards one specific group of students; however, the topics would be more easily understood if put in the context of specific examples. Some of the examples referenced large corporations and because of that, the primary focus on college students got lost at times.

Reviewer

Laura Riegger is a second-year student in the College Student Personnel program at Bowling Green State University. She is currently working as a hall director and student conduct officer at Baldwin-Wallace College and supervises a staff of 13 resident assistants. Laura graduated from Alma College in 2003 with a degree in Business Administration and Public Health.

Riegger, L. (2011). Student leadership using the E⁶ framework. [Review of the book *The student leadership guide*, B. Burchard]. National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs. Retrieved from <http://www.nclp.umd.edu>