

How to Develop/Teach and Assess Leadership/Management Skills: What are the Attributes of a Good Leader/Manager and Are These Attributes Teachable in a Classroom?

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Panel

NASPAA and COPRA have recommended competencies that need to be imparted into students of public administration. Included among these competencies is the ability to lead and manage as per NASPAA standard #5 ([NASPAA Annual Business meeting in Arlington, VA, October 16, 2009](#)). In order for an MPA program to be accredited by NASPAA/COPRA, the program must provide evidence of how it assesses the acquisition of these competencies. A yearlong process of systematically developing an MPA Major Field Test with a team of five schools in various regions of the United States provides some insight into the process of developing an evaluation tool. Each professor on the test team interviewed numerous practitioners to determine current issues in the profession. The practitioner information was filtered through at least one academic team member who used the information to create examination questions and submitted them for peer review. The test was based on NASPAA's five competencies for the MPA degree. Four schools list the data gleaned from the test results and its impact on their MPA program. Though the data set is currently not large enough to determine validity or reliability, the article describes the process and the utility of the test to offer the first collaborative measurement for schools to determine the strength of their MPA program. The authors of this panel proposal do not think that the traditional method of giving examinations is an appropriate assessment tool for something that has to be done or practiced.

The question is what are the ways that have been developed for proper assessment of an acquisition of leadership/management skills? A casual review of the existing literature does not provide an answer to this question. Other questions are: "What are the attributes of a good leader/manager and are such attributes teachable in a classroom setting?" Melinda Hill Mendoza (www.mas.org.uk/management, 03/02/2013), (www.onlinebusadv.com, 03/02/2013), (www.smallbusiness.chron.com, 03/02/2013), (www.comparebusinessproducts.com, 03/02/2013), (www.educatingfutureleaders.com, 03/02/2013), (www.cityandguilds, 03/02/2013), provide lists of attributes of a good leader and/or manager. However, opinions on whether attributes of a good leader/manager can be taught in a classroom are divided. For example, Jason Seiden, CEO ([Ajax Workforce Marketing](#)), states that just because you can learn something does not mean it can be taught. He further states that Leadership, like courage, can definitely be learned. But not taught, and especially not taught in a classroom.

The responsibility of the proposed panel or roundtable discussants is to validate and add more to the list of leadership/management attributes that have been identified by the sources given above and provide evidence or lack of evidence of methods of teaching the identified and validated attributes in a classroom setting. A list of identified attributes of good leaders and/or managers will be provided to the panelists.