Personality Traits of Leaders

Building Connections: Community Leadership Program

What personality traits does it take to lead?

Objectives
- Define personality traits
- Describe and understand the “Big Five Model of Personality”
- Review other common personality traits in leaders

Definitions
- **Traits** – Distinguishing personal characteristics
- **Personality** – a combination of traits that classifies an individual’s behavior

The Big 5 Model of Personality

Surgency
Agreeableness
Conscientiousness
Openness to Experience
Adjustment

Lussier and Achua (2001)
Surgency
- Leadership and extraversion traits
  - Interested in getting ahead
  - Leads through influencing
  - Outgoing
  - Likes to meet new people
  - Willing to confront others

Agreeableness
- Traits related to getting along with others
  - Warm, easygoing, compassionate, friendly and sociable
  - Has lots of friends

Adjustable
- Traits related to emotional stability
  - The fine line between stable and unstable.
  - Stable is being calm, good under pressure, relaxed and secure
  - Unstable is being nervous, poor under pressure, insecure

Conscientiousness
- Traits related to achievement
  - High credibility, conformity and organization
  - Work hard and put in extra time and effort to meet goals
Openness to Experience
- Traits related to willingness to change and try new things
  - Willing to take calculated risks

Conclusions of the Big 5
- Many organizations use the “Big Five Model of Personality.”
- It has universal application.
- Leaders need to know their personality type.
- Best predictor of job performance is conscientiousness dimension.

Effective Leader Traits
- Dominance
- Intelligence
- Flexibility
- High Energy
- Self-Confidence
- Locus of Control
- Integrity
- Stability
- Sensitivity to Others

Why Leaders Sometimes Fail
- Bullying style
- Viewed as being cold / arrogant
- Betrayed personal trust
- Self-centered
- Unable to delegate
- Poorly performing organization
Conclusions

- You don't have to have all these traits.
- You need to know your own self.
- Know your strengths/weaknesses.
- Work on the weak points to improve as a leader.