



**SIES School of Learning and Leadership Development (SIESLLD)**

**TRAINING NOTE (010/2024-25)**

**on**

**Developing Leadership Traits  
Among Students**

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SIES School of Learning and Leadership Development (SIESLLD),  
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## **Backdrop:**

In today's dynamic world, leadership is often viewed as a crucial soft skill for success in life. For students, understanding and developing leadership traits can make them ready to meet challenges in the long run. True leadership means the ability to influence, guide, and inspire others, a trait that students should develop and apply in various settings, from group projects to extracurricular activities.

## **Importance of Leadership:**

Leadership is all about fostering teamwork, motivating peers, and making informed decisions. For students, this soft skill is invaluable for several reasons:

**Improves Interpersonal Skills:** Leadership involves communicating effectively, resolving conflicts, and moving with all. These abilities are essential in academic settings, helping students collaborate better and build stronger relationships.

**Encourages Personal Growth:** Taking on leadership roles encourages self-discipline. It helps student leaders to handle responsibilities at the academic institutions, and make decisions, the qualities that are essential for personal growth.

**Prepares for Employment:** Employers seek individuals who not only excel technically but can also lead teams and adapt to challenges. A student who can demonstrate leadership is more likely to stand out in job interviews.

**Fosters Resilience:** Leadership requires students to be adaptable and resilient in the face of challenges. They learn to face criticism, tackle setbacks, and stay motivated, all crucial for long-term success.

## **Benefits of Developing Leadership:**

Beyond academic success, benefits of leadership extend to all areas of a student's life. Here are some key benefits:

**Boosts Confidence:** Leading a group or project helps students build confidence in their own abilities. With each successful experience, they feel more capable of handling challenges.

**Enhances Problem-Solving Skills:** Leaders are often faced with obstacles that require creative solutions. By practicing leadership, students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

**Cultivates Teamwork:** As students develop leadership skills, they learn how to collaborate effectively, recognize strengths of their peers, and work towards common goals.

**Encourages Initiative:** Leadership fosters a proactive mindset. Students who embrace leadership are more likely to take the initiatives, whether it is proposing new ideas in class, organizing extracurricular activities, or volunteering for community service.

### **Strategies to Imbibe Leadership:**

Some of the strategies to imbibe leadership include:

**Seek Out Opportunities:** Leadership opportunities are everywhere, from student council roles to being a team leader in group projects or organizing college events. The key is to actively seek these opportunities.

**Embrace Teamwork:** Leadership starts with teamwork. Students should learn to work effectively with others, respecting diverse perspectives, and valuing contribution by others.

**Develop Communication Skills:** Being an effective leader requires excellent communication. Focus on listening as much as speaking, ensuring that one can convey ideas clearly and understand perspectives of others.

**Learn from Mentors:** Identify teachers, peers, or professionals who exhibit strong leadership qualities and observe how they handle different situations. Their guidance can provide valuable insights.

**Volunteer for Responsibilities:** Students should take initiative to volunteer for responsibilities both inside and outside classroom. Whether it is organizing a study group, leading a community cause, or spearheading a class project, these experiences will help practice leadership.

**Reflect on Experiences:** After taking on leadership roles, students should always reflect on what went well and what could be improved. Continuous reflection allows for growth and refine one's leadership style.

### **Role of Academic Institutions:**

Some of the ways the academic institutions can help develop this important trait among students include the following:

**Course on Leadership:** Leadership cannot be taught; it needs to be experienced and learnt. The starting point is, however, learning some theoretical framework. The institutions at all levels should, therefore, have leadership courses (of differing depth) where various theories of leadership can be brought out. These courses should also teach students how to plan for specific projects, adopt time management principles, devise strategies and come out successfully. Experiential or project based learning techniques can be adopted for delivery of such course.

**Leadership Clubs:** The institutions should also try to set up leadership clubs of students where different types of activities can be practised, that bring out leadership. Games, role plays and sports activities are some examples that can be arranged through the clubs. These clubs can also organize various competitions that promote leadership, communications and critical thinking.

**Interaction with Leaders:** One act that can directly stimulate the young minds is to arrange for “interactions with leaders” from different strata of life: corporate, political, social or religious. These interactions, if organized in a structured and sustained manner, can help the students immensely.

**Leaders as Mentors:** An academic institution can identify the “potential leaders” from amongst the students and try to groom them through a “mentoring program” from leaders who may be alumni of the same institution. This type of mentoring approach may see through blooming of leadership potential among some students.

**Community Service:** This is yet another way the institutions can develop leadership qualities among the high potential students. Such community service and social work promote the spirit of teamwork, and sense of social responsibility that are essential for a good leader.

### **Moving Ahead:**

For students, leadership as a soft skill is a transformative asset. It equips them with the tools needed to excel in both academic and professional life. By actively seeking opportunities, improving communication and being exposed to various opportunities provided by the academic institutions, many students will develop this crucial trait. India needs a large number of ethical and responsible leaders. The academic institutions have got a great role to play in this regard.

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