

Creation of Online Forum for Leadership Development of KUIS Students

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Abstract

At Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS) in Chiba, Japan, the International Business Career (IBC) major in the Department of International Communication was created in order to prepare undergraduate students for success in the workplace. Six courses for IBC students were created and implemented by the author of this paper: four English for Business Career (EBC) courses and two organizational leadership seminars with public domain, online forums on leadership. This paper provides a historical account of the creation and implementation of the leadership forums in the organizational leadership seminars and examines the conceptualizations of leadership that appear in the forums. It is concluded that the leadership forums are valuable in preparing IBC students to create and to share (onsite and online) leadership stories about themselves.

1. Introduction

According to an online survey conducted by Hart Research Associates on behalf of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2013, p. 1), there are certain skills that employers desire in new graduates:

- Nearly all those surveyed (93%) agree, “a candidate’s demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex

problems is more important than their undergraduate major.”

- More than nine in ten of those surveyed say it is important that those they hire demonstrate ethical judgment and integrity; intercultural skills; and the capacity for continued new learning.
- More than three in four employers say they want colleges to place more emphasis on helping students develop five key learning outcomes, including: critical thinking, complex problem-solving, written and oral communication, and applied knowledge in real-world settings.

At Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS) in Chiba, Japan, the International Business Career (IBC) major in the Department of International Communication was created in order to prepare undergraduate students for success in the workplace. Six courses for IBC students were created and implemented by the author of this paper: four English for Business Career (EBC) courses and two organizational leadership seminars with public domain, online forums on leadership. Knight (2014) provides a historical account of the creation of the four English for Business Career (EBC) courses for IBC students. This paper provides a historical account of the creation and implementation of the leadership forums in the organizational leadership seminars and examines the conceptualizations of leadership that appear in the forums. It is concluded that the leadership forums are valuable in preparing IBC students to create and to share (onsite and online) leadership stories about themselves.

1.1 Historical view of course development at KUIS

In the Career Education Center (CEC) of KUIS, a business internship program featuring a simulated consulting company was created for the purpose of developing

leadership and the competencies required for success in the global workforce. (See Table 1, which was adapted from Knight, 2010, pp. 46-47.)

Table 1. Global competencies experienced in business internship program

Students	Competencies
Male and female students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teamwork ● Flexible attitude ● Acting outside of your comfort zone ● Analyzing issues from many different perspectives ● Practice good listening skills ● Contribute to team building ● Understand the vision/purpose of the team
Male students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Patience with others ● Increase in confidence to work in foreign countries ● Greater willingness to take risks ● Belief that you can affect change ● Greater respect for the views of others ● Greater awareness of the relationship between different organizations ● Knowledge of the basic parts of a marketing plan ● Greater understanding of how outside factors affect a business ● Greater awareness of personal skills and abilities, handle problems under challenging situations ● Become receptive to learning ● Solve different kinds of problems effectively
Female students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Openness to new experiences ● Greater appreciation of teamwork ● Effectively manage your own stress ● Act dependably ● Try to express your ideas in spoken English in a way that the listener could understand ● Gather information effectively

The four EBC courses that were created and implemented after the business internship program also focused on leadership development. The content of the EBC courses and the increasingly leadership-oriented roles of the students are outlined in Table 2 (Knight, 2014).

Table 2. EBC courses

Course	Focus	Learner's role
EBC 1	<p>Business communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Business communication in the office (meeting people, telephoning, company performance, etc.) ● Business meetings (based on short business case studies: human resources, marketing, investment, etc.) ● Personal accomplishment stories (in preparation for job interviews, study abroad, etc.; situation, action, result) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student in business communication class ● Learner ● Prospective employee ● Employee
EBC 2	<p>Business strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Business case studies (for native English speakers) ● Materials (PowerPoint presentations and business case studies: marketing, operations, people, finance, strategy, external environment) ● Activities (selecting case studies, making presentations, leading discussions of case studies in class) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student in business case study class ● Teacher ● Manager

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Course	Focus	Learner's role
EBC 3	<p>Business management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Onsite and online business management simulation ● Students are owners of small business and must make strategic decisions concerning business operations. ● Students learn about financial statements (balance sheet, income statement, cash flow statement), strategic management, and business ethics. ● Students work in teams to make business decisions and deliver presentations about company performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student in business simulation class ● President ● Partner ● Business owner
EBC 4	<p>Business creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students learn about the important factors in making a business plan by conducting research and making team presentations. ● Students learn about organizations in the US that support business start-ups. ● Students compete to put together the best business plans and make team presentations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student in business entrepreneurship class ● Partner ● Business founder

The organizational leadership seminars and public domain, online forums on leadership were created after the four EBC courses had been implemented. Table 3 provides an overview of the components and activities of the seminars.

Table 3. Organizational leadership seminars

	Components	Activities
1	Beliefs about leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exposure to beliefs of leaders (about leadership) in the public, private, and academic sectors through the reading of excerpts from interviews with leaders
2	Research about leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The conducting of interviews with leaders to understand the beliefs of leaders about leadership ● Research and presentations about famous leaders ● The study of framing as the language of leadership (Fairhurst, 2011)
3	Action as leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The design of activities on individual and team levels for personal growth as leaders ● The creation and implementation of team projects ● The creation and implementation of online discussions on leadership in English with leaders

In the organizational leadership seminars, it may be said that students become aware of how leadership is conceptualized. They come into contact with leaders and learn from those leaders. They become aware of their own potential to lead. They are encouraged to engage in leadership activities. They learn to communicate as leaders. They learn to tell their leadership stories. In the organizational leadership seminars, the seeds are planted for the students to grow from local leaders into global leaders.

1.2 Influences on the creation of the public domain, online forums on leadership

The creation of the public domain, online forums on leadership in the organizational leadership seminars for IBC students was influenced by “boundary

spanning leadership experiences” that primarily involved online communication. In a publication of the Center for Creative Leadership (2011, p. 4), boundary spanning leadership and its importance are explained as follows:

The perspectives that we uncovered from senior executives reveal that as today’s business challenges span across boundaries, so too must leadership. The ever-increasing complexity and interdependence of today’s world calls for a critical transformation in leadership from managing and protecting boundaries to boundary spanning....We define boundary spanning leadership as the capability to establish direction, alignment, and commitment across boundaries in service of a higher vision or goal (Ernst and Chrobot-Mason, 2010; Ernst and Yip, 2009). This capability resides within and across individuals, groups and teams, and larger organizations and systems.

Four boundary spanning leadership experiences of the author of this paper occurred primarily online and were project-related. (See Table 4.)

Table 4. Boundary spanning leadership experiences

	Experience	Description
1	<p>Creation of online forum management program for the Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies (IR/PS) at the University of California, San Diego</p> <p>Note: Name to be changed to School of Global Policy and Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Online, threaded discussion during the entire month of June 2007 about intellectual property rights (IPR) in the pilot project for the first global, online forum management program for the alumni and students of IR/PS entitled Issues for the Global Workforce ● Objective: To make the IR/PS alumni and student participants more globally aware and employable
2	<p>Creation of Pacific-Rim Vision Statement for the Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies (IR/PS) at the University of California, San Diego</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fifteen threaded discussions, each led by one or two professors with expertise in the discussion topic, were conducted simultaneously over two-month period to create Pacific-Rim Vision Statement
3	<p>TESOL Community Discussions in TESOL International Association</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Five TESOL ESPIS Community Discussions 2011-2012 that educated and created a global ESP community ● Co-leader of three of the five one-month long discussions ● The final two discussions were in the public domain, including a discussion led by the ESP groups of TESOL International Association and IATEFL
4	<p>TESOL Board of Directors Governance Review Task Force</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board of Directors appointed task force charged with evaluating current governance of TESOL International Association and proposing changes to improve its performance ● Small, high-level leadership team

These four experiences, which were historic firsts and milestones for the organizations concerned, inspired the author of this paper to create and implement the public domain, online forums on leadership in the organizational leadership seminars.

2.0 The public domain, online forums on leadership

The public domain, online forums on leadership were created for three primary purposes:

1. To prepare students for their participation in future online forums in the public domain where they could be practicing boundary spanning leadership
2. To provide students with the opportunity to discuss leadership and internalize lessons of leadership
3. To prepare students to tell (face-to-face and online) their own stories of leadership accomplishments

The public domain aspect of the leadership forum was emphasized repeatedly in class by the author of this paper (in his role as instructor of the seminar) in order to encourage the students to reflect carefully on their own thoughts before posting them. At the same time, the leadership forum gave the students more time for reflection than they would have in a typical classroom discussion.

The students and the instructor had to log in to the leadership forum to be able to contribute to the discussion, but anyone around the world could read the discussion without logging in.

The participants in the leadership forums included IBC students in two different organizational leadership seminars created and taught by the author of this paper. IBC students usually take the same seminar in their second and third years as undergraduates. In this paper, Group 1 refers to third-year students who were in the second year of the seminar. Group 2 refers to second-year students who were in the first year of the seminar. The seminar for Group 1 students and the seminar for Group 2 students were taught at different times, and the public domain, online leadership forums were also completely separate.

2.1 Discussion topics

Nohria & Khurana (2010, p. 7) describe the state of research on leadership as consisting of “a set of dualities that...seem to be at the heart of research on leadership.” These dualities were transformed by the author of this paper into pairs of statements that became part of a questionnaire used to conduct semi-structured interviews with primarily native English speaking leaders in the public, private, and academic sectors (Knight, 2011, 2012). (See Table 4.) The leaders in the interviews were asked to identify which statement in a pair they agreed with more.

Table 4. Pairs of statements discussed in interviews and in leadership forums

1a	A leader’s primary role is producing superior <i>performance</i> or results.
1b	A leader’s primary role is making <i>meaning</i> .
2a	A leader is a special <i>person</i> (with unique personality and character traits).
2b	Leadership is a <i>social role</i> (defined as an influence relationship between the leader and follower).
3a	Leadership is <i>universal</i> (there is something in common among leaders across all situations and contexts).

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3b	Leadership is <i>particular</i> (each person must lead differently depending on his or her own identity, understanding of leadership, and particular situation).
4a	A leader has the ability to exercise <i>agency</i> (the power, influence, will, and ability to do, to act, to change).
4b	A leader needs to attend to <i>constraints</i> (such as the organization's history, myriad demands, and stakeholders).
5a	Leadership development should be thought of in terms that emphasize leaders' capacity for <i>thinking and doing</i> (which puts an emphasis on various competencies).
5b	Leadership development should be thought of in terms that emphasize leaders' capacity of <i>becoming and being</i> (which puts an emphasis on an evolving identity).

In the leadership forums, Group 1 students and Group 2 students posted comments about several topics including the following:

- The students' original definitions of leadership
- The students' responses to the pairs of statements in Table 4
- The responses (obtained by the students) of Japanese leaders to the pairs of statements in Table 4

In addition, Group 1 students created and posted leadership scenarios for leadership training purposes. Group 1 students have also been planning to have a month-long discussion (on leadership) in a public domain, online leadership forum with invited leaders.

3.0 Results

This section examines how the IBC students seemed to conceptualize leadership in the leadership forum. The original definitions of leadership provided by the students were analyzed with NVivo 10 software (http://www.qsrinternational.com/products_nvivo.aspx). Word frequency analyses based on *exact words* seemed to indicate that Group 1 and Group 2 students were conceptualizing leadership in a similar way. (See Figures 2 and 3.) However, word frequency analyses based on *similar words including generalizations* seemed to indicate that the students possibly had different orientations to leadership. (See Figures 4 and 5.) Please note that the size of the word is related of the number of times that the word appears in the data.

Figure 2. Group 1 – Word frequency (exact words)



Figure 3. Group 2 – Word Frequency (exact words)



Figure 4. Group 1 – Word frequency (similar words including generalizations)



Figure 5. Group 2 – Word Frequency (similar words including generalizations)



Moreover, in regard to the second pair of statements in Table 4 (i.e., 2a and 2b), most Group 1 students selected “social role” whereas most Group 2 students selected “special person.” (See Figures 6 and 8.) It is also interesting to note how the responses of the leaders interviewed by the students differed from the responses of the students. (See Figures 7 and 9.)

Figure 6. Group 1 students

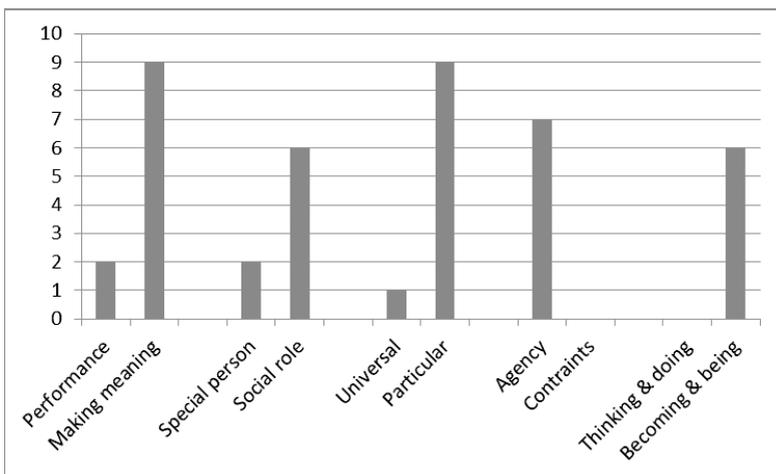


Figure 7. Leaders interviewed by Group 1 students

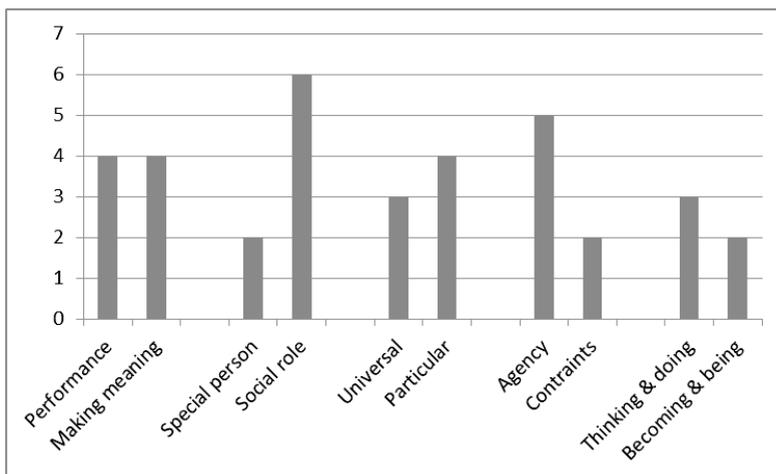


Figure 8. Group 2 students

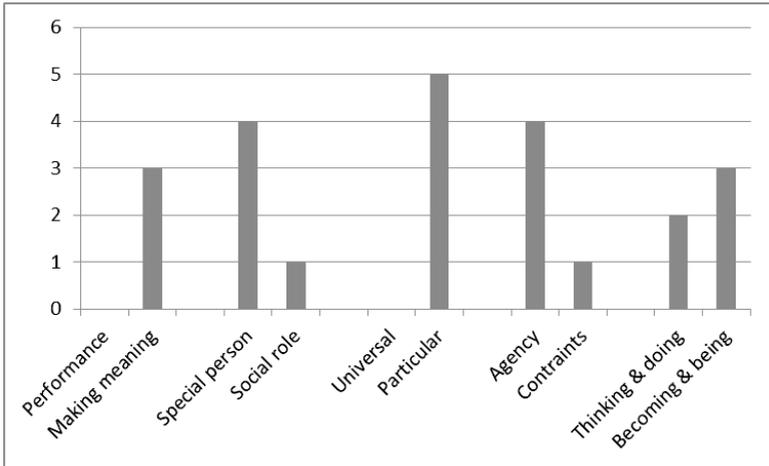
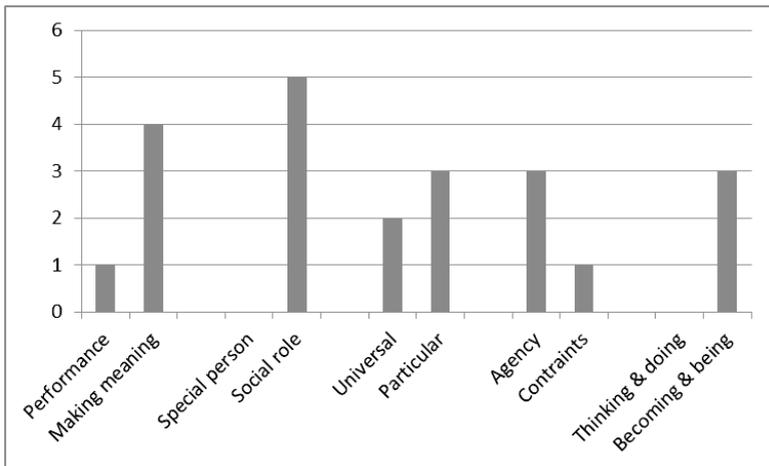


Figure 9. Leaders interviewed by Group 2 students



Leadership is often referred to as an “influence relationship.” Bass (1990, pp. 19-20) writes the following:

Leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perceptions and expectations of the members. Leaders are agents of change – persons whose acts affect other people more than other people’s acts affect them. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group.

In order to try to clarify whether the students conceived of leadership as being an “influence relationship,” the “actions” identified in the original definitions of leadership provided by the students and posted in the leadership forums were listed in Table 5 (Group 1) and Table 6 (Group 2).

Table 5. Actions in the original definitions of leadership of Group 1 students

Actions	Number of students
Enhance motivation or passion; encourage	3
Be a good listener	3
Be a good communicator	3
Be responsible and reliable	3
Have vision	3
Suggest direction and show way toward final goal	2
Make a strong decision	2
Deal with problems calmly	2
Contribute to success of followers	2

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Actions	Number of students
Take the lead to act	1
Summarize opinions of team members	1
Give exact judgment and directions	1
Enhance effectiveness of work performance	1
Improve ties among followers	1
Provide opportunity to raise skill of followers	1
Be optimistic	1
Make comfortable environment for followers	1
Agree with members at appropriate time	1
Get things in shape successfully	1
Persuade	1
Create consensus	1
Think about people and organization	1
Direct people	1
Solve problems	1
Suggest new idea	1
Achieve vision	1
Understand team members	1
Take care of all responsibilities	1
Take care of followers	1
Be sharp and perfect	1
Be honest	1
Make others rely on you	1

Table 6. Actions in the original definitions of leadership of Group 2 students

Actions	Number of students
Have a leadership ability, sense or talent	2
Persuade followers	1
Tell own opinion clearly	1
Be responsible	1
Be cooperative	1
Be flexible	1
Exert influence on people	1
Clarify goal	1
Decide what to do	1
Motivate oneself and others	1
Bring ideas together	1
Create a win-win situation	1
Be a good listener	1
Respect individuality	1
Make people positively follow	1
Get trust of followers	1
Have creative and realistic ideas	1

Although the majority of items listed in Table 5 and in Table 6 reflect leadership as being a social role and influence relationship, the top item in Table 6 portrays leadership as resulting from an ability or talent. Table 5 and Table 6 also seem to indicate that the views of the individual students are not the same. The leadership development scenarios created by Group 1 students require the leaders to influence others in different ways. (See Table 7.)

Table 7. Leadership development scenarios (Group 1)

Leadership action	Scenario
Motivate others to work harder	You work at Japanese bar and you're a part-time leader. You receive a great deal of trust from other staff and also your boss. You have to act as a buffer between all part-timers and formal workers including shop master. Your big role is to communicate with all staff and to keep their motivation at high level. But we caused a rift in the friendship between our boss and the other staff because our boss has made a small trouble. after that trouble, part-timers got down their own motivation and they goofed off their working. So, your task is to improve all staff's motivation. If you faced this kind of problem, what should you do?
Increase sales	You are a store manager in a restaurant. This restaurant is located in Tokyo station. However recently their sales decrease so headquarter decided to extend business hours. Unfortunately, staffs said don't want to work more. So do you have idea to increase sales except extend open hour?
Increase club members	You are a manager of members' bar. If people are introduced by club member, they can also become club member. So your store has a lot of regular customers. However, sales are decreased, because club member isn't increased recently. So you have to get club member. How can you get more club member?
Increase motivation of followers after failure	You attend a walking event. Participants are divided into some groups and have to help each other to walk 40 kilometers within 8 hours. The course is unknown area and distributed map is too simple, so it is hard to walk smoothly. The final objective of this event is reaching a goal completely. You are a leader of the group. Your role as a leader is management of time, followers' health condition and so on. The event started and your group was doing their best, but unfortunately, your group couldn't reach a goal in time. The followers are disappointed, and their motivation decrease. In this situation, how do you behave as a leader? What do you tell to the followers?

Leadership action	Scenario
Retain customers	You are a manager of sports gym. One day, one of the training machines was out of order. You asked a mechanic to repair but it may take a lot of time. The problem is that many customers who like the machine and come to the gym to use the machine complained and quit membership. You really want them to stop quitting but your followers, full-time and part-time workers, gave up preventing customers from quitting. The followers got pretty tired of listening customers' complaint. In this situation, what do you do and say to your followers and customers?
Handle complaint of part-time staff	You are an office manager. One of your staff is a woman who has worked for the company for many years. She is a full-time employee. She uses her seniority to order part-time staff to do things, but she is not the official boss. The part-time staff are complaining. What do you solve about this situation?

Three of the scenarios deal specifically with personnel issues, and three of the scenarios concern business performance. All of the scenarios call for the leader to persuade or motivate others. Therefore, in these scenarios, leadership is depicted as a social role and influence relationship. However, the type of influence required depends on the situation.

4.0 Discussion

After a year discussing leadership in the organizational leadership seminar and in the public domain, online forum, one might think that Group 1 students would have acquired a similar view of leadership. However, in the second year of the organizational leadership seminar, Group 1 students were asked to draw pictures of leadership as part of a fun leadership development activity created by the author of this paper. (See Table 8.) The activity was intended to inspire students to create other

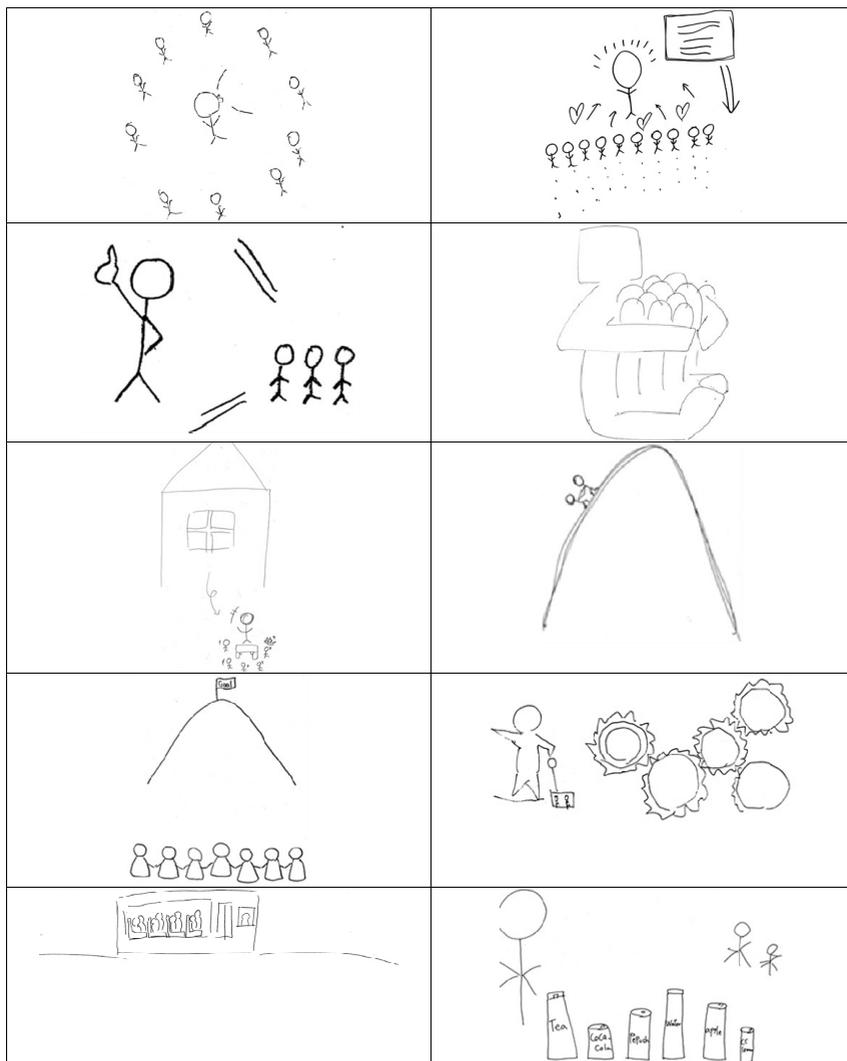
fun activities to learn leadership and to share those ideas online. The pictures drawn by the students in class appear in Figure 10.

Table 8. Notes on leadership development activity (Group 1)

1. I handed out an A4 size blank sheet of paper to each student.
2. I asked them to write their names on the paper.
3. I told them to turn over the paper.
4. I told them that they were going to draw a picture of leadership on the paper. They could not write any words.
5. They would have 60 seconds to draw their pictures.
6. They could not look at anyone else's picture so they had to keep their eyes focused on their own papers.
7. I gave them two minutes to think.
8. Then I told them to draw.
9. I quickly collected the papers.
10. I told the students that I was going to hold up a drawing and that they should point to the person whose drawing they thought it was.
11. In many cases, the students were incorrect in their guesses.
12. In some cases, we followed up with an explanation. (I would emphasize this step more in the future.)

It was really fun. There was a lot of laughter and the game was a big success.

Figure 10. Drawings of leadership (Group 1)



An examination of the ten pictures of leadership reveals that nine of the pictures contain leaders and followers. (The picture without followers was drawn by a student who did not participate in the organizational leadership seminar during the first year.) It is interesting how the pictures portray different stories and different types of relationships between the leader and followers.

One of the primary goals of the organizational leadership seminars and the public domain, online forums has been to make students aware of their own leadership activities and prepare students to tell their own leadership stories in a job interview. An effective approach to telling a leadership story is explained in the Career Resource Manual of the University of California, Davis (UCD) Internship and Career Center. (See Table 9.)

Table 9. Tips for the Behavioral Interview from UC Davis Internship and Career Center (Career Resource Manual, 2013, pp. 44-45)

Tips for the Behavioral Interview

Behavioral interview questions assess how you have acted in past situations, with the idea that past performance is a key indicator of your future efforts.

How to Prepare

- Review and select some challenging experience that reflects positively on your behavior including work situations, project-based or team work, campus activities, community service and leadership experience. Employers are investigating how you deal with problems, failures, difficult teams or supervisors.
- Focus on your strengths and positive attributes, without complaining or criticizing others.
- Jot down ideas about each experience and examine your role .How did you handle problems, show initiative and contribute to the outcome?
- Use the **S.T.A.R.** method to help you form an example:
 - Situation • Task/Problem • Action • Result

- Expect the employer to ask an open-ended question about a past experience and then continue to ask questions that reveal any of the following:
 - communication skills, leadership and organizational ability
 - analytical and problem solving skills
 - your decision-making process
 - cooperative and/or competitive nature
 - initiative • flexibility • creativity
- Be honest. Don't exaggerate. Your answers will be reviewed for consistency.
- Practice. Draw from several types of experiences to show depth.
- Turn any interview question into a behavioral answer with an example.

....

Employers May Ask You...

- Tell me about a time when you were in a leadership position.

Group 1 students were asked to write narratives of their own leadership communication experiences at the end of the first year of the organizational leadership seminar. Although the students wrote their narratives in response to instructions containing multiple questions (Knight, 2011, 2012), Table 10 displays the narratives in the S.T.A.R. format explained in Table 9.

Table 10. Leadership in student narratives

Narrative	Situation	Task/Problem	Action	Result
1	President of school Baking Club	Motivating members to prepare sweets for school festival	Explained the benefits: You can be absent from class to help and you can eat some cookies you bake	The students helped agreeably.
2	Captain of dance crew	Getting members to attend dance practice	- Permitted sub-leader to handle discipline issues - Practiced hard so that members had to attend to keep up - Went out to eat with members after practice	Members began to always attend practice and a strong team was formed.

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Narrative	Situation	Task/Problem	Action	Result
3	Leader of student consulting team	Preparing the final presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared ideas only after other members had no ideas - Prepared data in advance to get buy in for ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The team members agreed with the leader's ideas. - The presentation went well.
4	Co-organizer of coming-of-age party	Getting people to attend the party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The co-organizers discussed problems, etc. - Action was taken such as getting addresses for teachers, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Over 100 people attended including former students and eight teachers
5	Leader of group of five friends	Needed to raise TOEIC score and essay exam score in short time to be admitted to university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The leader proposed that the group study after school with each friend taking a turn to be the teacher. - The leader thought positively and encouraged everyone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Four of the five could pass the exam. - The last friend could finally pass the exam after encouragement by the leader.
6	Assistant to boss of Japanese pub; leader of part-time workers	Told to bridge the gap between full-time and part-time workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Never used negative words in order to create good atmosphere - Wanted all new faces to enjoy working at pub - Helped workers to smile - Talked seriously in order to obtain trust from them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The leader was able to gain trust of co-workers. - The boss and workers relied on leader when they faced problems. - The leader gave them directions to work efficiently.
7	Leader of student team in class	Teammates had strong personalities so sometimes project idea did not shape up in class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listened to their ideas carefully - Tried to talk actively because they did not like the silence - Tried to give ideas personally so that the meeting was exciting 	The team could go forward together.

Narrative	Situation	Task/Problem	Action	Result
8	Leader of student group in class after losing rock-scissors-paper match with other group members	Assigned to discuss problem and to make a team presentation about the solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Took the opportunity of being in leadership role to explain to other group members the leader's desire for the team to give the best presentation in class and to solve the problem - Explained logically and made other group members understand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other group members could understand the leader's opinion and agreed to work together outside of class. - They could work as a team, and the presentation was successful.

Although Group 1 students created leadership stories that fit into the S.T.A.R. format, Group 1 students and Group 2 students have been encouraged by the instructor to create increasingly impressive leadership stories. (See Table 11.)

Table 11. Leadership projects

Group	Projects
1	Students told by local government official that they were first student team ever to request permission to do beach clean-up event (which is public event requiring government approval); received support of government and interacted online with government official.
1	Student team provided English language education classes to children in orphanage.
1	Student team held comedy performance event in Tokyo and donated proceeds to charity.
2	Students told by KUIS administration that they were first student team to seek permission to create PR video for university.

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The projects in Table 11 have been particularly challenging because they require the students to practice boundary spanning leadership. The students need to obtain permission from administration on campus for any projects they want to do, and it is difficult to get approval for projects that involve the public. They are being faced with the challenge of getting the support (or “buy in”) of various stakeholders including students and non-students. Based on an investigation of beach clean-up events in California, the instructor pushed the students to obtain legal protection in Japan which resulted in introductions to business insurance company representatives.

Samuel Bacharach, the McKelvey-Grant Professor of Organizational Behavior at Cornell University, states the following about leadership development:

What drives me is a simple belief...Leadership is something we can teach. The way I look at leadership, it's leadership with a small 'l' - a series of micro skills that actually can be taught....In fact, throughout our society in every organization, everyone has to lead. In this day and age, everyone has to be a change agent. Everyone has to be pushing agenda. So in that sense, we can't afford the luxury of leadership with a big 'L.'"

If leadership is conceived as an influence relationship (at any level), then certainly the skills and actions needed to influence others depend upon the situation.

In the organizational leadership seminar and the public domain, online forum, the students have been learning how leadership is conceptualized, and they have also been learning firsthand how to influence others in the process of creating their own leadership stories. As the students continue to grow as leaders, they need to learn to

tell their leadership stories effectively to a number of different audiences and in a variety of situations. The students need to develop their “framing” skills in English (Fairhurst, 2011). In this regard, one of the Group 1 students took the initiative to join a Toastmasters club (<http://www.toastmasters.org/>) where speeches are given in English only. The student recently won a club competition and will compete in a competition with other Toastmaster club winners. Moreover, the same student succeeded in obtaining an impressive internship by talking about Toastmasters. It seems that the organizational leadership seminars and the leadership forums are helping and motivating IBC students to acquire the skills that employers desire in new graduates.

5.0 References

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