



OUR MISSION: Women and Youth Supporting Each Other empowers young women by providing the resources and support necessary to make positive life choices and create community change.

SKILL BUILDING TOOLKIT: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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Leadership Brainstorm

All-group discussion
10-15 minutes

PURPOSE: The Leadership Brainstorm activity is designed to warm up the directors' minds as they begin to think about what it means to be a leader. It is an opportunity for free-association and creativity. There are no wrong answers.

DIRECTIONS: On the chalkboard, write the following 3 terms: MENTORSHIP, EMPOWERMENT, and COURAGE. On a blank piece of paper, have directors divide the space into 3 parts. For one minute, have them silently write down any words/phrases that they associate with MENTORSHIP. Once that minute is up, move on to do one minute for EMPOWERMENT, and then one minute for COURAGE. After the silent brainstorm, the group will debrief as a whole for each term. One term at a time, have the directors share their list with the group. Many words/phrases will probably be repeated. The ones that are most often repeated should be written up on the board under the main term. The facilitator should ask the following questions throughout the exercise (along with any other points of discussion that may arise):

- Why do you think you associated that word/phrase with this term?
- How does this word/phrase embody the term?
- Can you think of a specific example in which you or someone you know embodied this word/phrase?
- What words/phrases come up most often?
- Are there any other words/phrases that should be added?
- What are a few words/phrases that you feel DO NOT embody the terms?

NEXT STEPS: After the group discussion is over, the facilitator should transition the group into Part II of the Leadership Development Activity Package: Leadership Scenarios. To do this, the facilitator can ask the following questions:

- Has there been a time in WYSE where you or a fellow director/mentor encountered a difficult situation?
- How did she handle this situation?
- Did she succeed? Why or why not?
- What was the outcome?
- What specific leadership traits did she use to handle that situation?



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Leadership Scenarios (Role Play)

Overview: Leadership Scenarios – and role play in general – is a great exercise to provide mentors with WYSE-specific dilemmas which require them to draw upon their problem solving skills, explore various options for handling difficult situations, and further develop the necessary leadership traits of a successful WYSE mentor.

Directions: Divide into small groups (2-3 people in each). Each group will be assigned one (or more, if time permits) of the scenario prompts below. The group must work together to figure out how to best solve the problem at hand (8-10 mins). Then each group must act out their scene for the others, reading aloud their scenario prompt first. After each group acts out their solution, the activity facilitator should debrief with the entire group by asking the following questions:

- What was most difficult about that situation?
- Why did you choose to handle the situation in that way?
- What traits of leadership did you rely on to make your decisions?
- Are there any other options you considered?
- What outside resources did you consider using (e.g. school counselor, WYSE Board, parent, etc.)?

EXAMPLE SCENARIOS:

- Your branch is coming to the end of your second program year. Last year, the end-of-year banquet was held in the classroom with mentors and mentees. This year, mentors have voted that they would like to invite mentees' parents to the banquet, requiring a larger space, more food—a bigger budget. You didn't budget this into your annual allocation, but the Director Team agrees that this would be a great idea. How do you start raising money to put on the event that your mentors are looking forward to?
- You have received your first round of mentor applications—hooray! There are 25 applicants for 10 mentor slots. However, after reviewing the applications more closely, you notice that almost every applicant is from a Humanities major, only 2 applicants are Hispanic, and just 1 is black. You know that the majority of your mentees will be Hispanic or black. What do you do?
- It's midway through the fall semester and you have five members of the



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Director Team. You are about to start recruiting mentors and creating your session schedule. Seemingly out of nowhere, one of the directors tells the other members that she is too overwhelmed with her course load and will have to either take on fewer responsibilities or step off of the Director Team. As a team, what do you do?

- You have had two sessions in the semester so far. All 10 of your mentees attended the first two sessions and your mentors are really excited! However, at the third session, only three mentees show up. At session number four, just four mentees attend. Mentors are starting to get discouraged. You have mentees' permission forms but have not yet paired mentors with mentees. What do you do?
- During a particularly heavy session about discrimination, a mentee runs out of the classroom crying. You want the mentee to receive the support and space she needs to work through this moment. However, you also know that students are not allowed to be unaccompanied in the halls and that the vice principal, whose office is down the hall from the WYSE room, will likely punish the mentee if she gets caught. How do you advise her mentor? What do you do?
- After one session, a mentor tells you that her mentee arrived at session acting kind of strange and told the mentor that she thinks she might be pregnant. How do you respond to this situation?
- Before the session on violence against women, a mentee texts her mentor that she will be skipping session because "it hits too close to home." The mentor reports this to you. How do you respond to this situation?
- It's your week to lead session and you're really excited! During session everyone seems pretty interested in the topic and activities but there is one mentor who keeps having side conversations, texting on their phone and generally not paying attention. You are afraid that they are distracting mentees and other mentors from the session. How do you handle this situation?
- You are part of the WYSE Directive Team this year and together you have decided to hold a bake sale fundraiser to make money for an upcoming event. Directors are assigned their tasks, but as it gets closer to the day of the bake sale, one director (in charge of coordinating the donated goods



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- from mentors) has not responded to any emails, and none of the mentors seem to know what to do with their donations. This is your biggest fundraiser of the year, so you are concerned, but you don't want to step on the director's toes. How do you handle this situation?
- You have been assigned a big role as this year's Recruitment Director of WYSE! You start planning ahead, but then school starts, you have homework, tests, and other extracurriculars you need to do things for, too. You feel like you might not be able to manage all of your WYSE recruitment duties but you don't want to let your team down. How do you handle this situation?
 - You have noticed at a few sessions that one of the mentors is using some inappropriate language in front of mentees (e.g. "that's gay," curse words, etc.). You don't want an ugly confrontation, but her behavior needs to stop. How do you handle this situation?

NEXT STEPS: Encourage the directors to continue discussing any larger issues that arise during this activity. Brainstorm a group list of the best ways that the situations were handled.



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Activity: Reality Check

Objective: To pinpoint actual leadership behavior and to set behavior goals

Purpose: This activity paints a picture of actual behavior and then helps the leader see how he or she can redistribute behavior.

Activity Description:

Have the participants think about what they actually do on a daily basis. Then ask them to draw generalizations about how they spend their leadership time. Each participant completes the Leadership Behavior Chart below (In pink).

You can follow up with full group or small group discussion. **The central question is this: Is your leadership behavior out of sync with the way that you feel an effective leader should be spending his or her energy?**

Think about your daily interaction with the people who you lead. Generally speaking, determine the actual behaviors that define that interaction. Using the list of behaviors below, determine the amount of time (in percentages) that you generally spend on each behavior. Then in the second column, determine what you feel would be ideal distribution of time (in percentages).

Follow Up Questions

Is there a gap between how you should spend your energy and how you actually spend it?
 Are there some behaviors that are taking up too much of your leadership time? Why?
 Are there some strategies that you can employ that would move you closer to your ideal distribution of behavior?

Options:

- A. Some groups may want to calculate behavior totals to see how their peers are spending their energy.
- B. From the third column it is easy to move into a discussion about "ideal" leader distribution of energy.**
- C. You may also use this same format with both meeting and team interaction.

Added thoughts or considerations: Since this activity helps participants see what they are actually doing, it helps them translate leadership theory into real behavior. **Once participants review their charts it is easier for them to design strategies to align their leadership behavior.**



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Activity: Reality Check

Leadership Behavior Chart

BEHAVIOR	REAL PERCENTAGE OF TIME SPENT ON BEHAVIOR	IDEAL PERCENTAGE OF TIME YOU WOULD SPEND ON BEHAVIOR
1. Informing		
2. Directing		
3. Clarifying or Justifying		
4. Persuading		
5. Collaborating		
6. Brainstorming or Envisioning		
7. Reflecting (Quiet Time for Thinking)		
8. Observing		
9. Resolving interpersonal conflicts		
10. Praising and/or encouraging		