

# The LeaderShape® Institute: Qualitative Data

Open and axial coding was used to analyze qualitative responses to the 2006 six month surveys for both campus-based and national sessions. Analysis revealed consistent themes between and within the data regarding the impact of participation in The LeaderShape Institute. From participants' responses to the ways in which the six-day experience influenced them, three major themes emerged as outcomes: 1) recognition of personal growth and self-awareness, 2) greater understanding of and commitment to leading with integrity, and 3) increased efficacy around their own leadership capacity. Clarification of these themes, along with representative quotes from participants follow.

## Recognition of Personal Growth and Self-awareness

Participants spoke often about realizing they "learned so much" about themselves through their experience at The LeaderShape Institute. They identified specific areas such as a greater awareness of their own leadership style and identification of strengths and weaknesses. One participant summarized the program's influence in this way:

*The LeaderShape Institute taught me about my personal leadership style. This included capitalizing on my strengths and working on my weaknesses to become an effective leader. I now realize the importance of looking at leadership as a relational role and not one of being appointed or elected to a position of responsibility.*

In addition, participants also reflected on how The LeaderShape Institute contributed to their growth by helping to identify important personal values and connection to personal purpose:

*This has given me insight into my own beliefs and it has helped clarify the values that I hold above all others. Additionally, I feel the goals didn't help me answer the question "what direction are you going?" Rather it helped clarify "why" I'm going in that direction.*

Finally, participants articulated how they gained self-knowledge by having the opportunity to learn more about others' in relationship to themselves:

*I will NEVER forget what I learned at LeaderShape! It opened my eyes to new ideas and new perspectives! It's like they say, "once the mind has been stretched, it will never go back to its original shape."*

## Greater Understanding of and Commitment to Leading with Integrity

Participants were able to articulate meaningful learning around their own integrity as leaders, illuminating incongruities which prompted changes in behavior:

*[What] a great experience! The LeaderShape Institute has encouraged me to abide by the concept "leading with integrity" or in other words, walk my talk. Before that I hardly thought of leading with integrity.*



A not-for-profit organization  
committed to developing young  
adults to lead with integrity.

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Additionally, The LeaderShape Institute also affirmed participants who had a personal commitment to integrity prior to the program, offering them connection and encouragement for their choices:

*I do not think LeaderShape taught me any new ideas regarding integrity, but it has reinforced my ethical standards and shown me that there is a support group of fellow leaders.*

### Increased Efficacy Around Their Own Leadership Capacity

Recognition of leadership capacity occurred in several different ways. In addition to increased confidence in their own abilities as a result of their involvement in The LeaderShape Institute, participants reported efficacy around belief in their passions and dreams, realizing “there is no impossible goal” and being “more willing and more confident in taking on leadership roles” as a result. A participant offered this example:

*I am much more active in organizations. I have also found a passion I did not have before in injustices that face immigrants. Thanks to LeaderShape I don't feel there are limits in accomplishing goals.*

Other participant summarized their learning from the six-day experience in these ways:

*It really helped instill a firm belief that one person can make a difference and that if I want to see change, I need to become the person that makes things happen.*

*I think that LeaderShape empowered me to claim the word “leader” as a label for myself, and by always thinking of myself as a leader, I am constantly thinking about integrity.*

*[My involvement in LeaderShape] has taught me not to be afraid of leadership and that I can set high goals and be able to achieve them;*

Finally, participants reported finding their voice as a result of their experience and spoke about having the confidence in themselves to “speak up” when they “feel strongly about something”, whether it be about their visions and passions, or having the courage to stand up for their convictions:

*I never would have stood up for my beliefs this way without taking the things I learned at LeaderShape. The way I approach situations has changed drastically, and I have grown as a person.*