**Observational Exercise**

Ethical Leadership

Purpose

1. To become aware of the dimensions of ethical leadership

2. To assess how actual leaders exhibit ethical leadership

Directions

1. For this exercise, you must observe a public presentation of a leader in your community. This can be a pastor, a college president, a mayor, a city commissioner, the head of a social service agency, or some other community leader.

2. Record what you observe about the leader’s ethics in the categories that follow. Try to be thorough in your descriptions of the leader’s presentation.

Leader’s name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Leader’s title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Occasion: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. The **character** of the leader: What was the leader like? What kind of person was the leader? What were the leader’s

strengths and weaknesses?

2. The **actions** of the leader: How does this leader go about accomplishing goals? Where does the leader stand on (1)

showing respect, (2) serving others, and (3) showing justice?

3. The **goals** of the leader: What were the leader’s main goals? Were the leader’s goals clear to you and others in the

audience? How would you assess the value and worth of those goals?

4. The **honesty** of the leader: What did you observe about this leader’s honesty? Was the leader open and forthright?

How authentic did you find this leader to be?

5. The **power** of the leader: Based on French and Raven’s (1959) types of power, what kind of power did this leader

exhibit? What did you observe about how this leader would use his or her power with others?

6. The **values** of the leader: Based on the presentation, what do you think this leader values? What is important to this

leader? What values did this leader promote in his or her presentation?

Questions

1. What is your overall assessment of this leader’s ethics?

2. What specific examples in the leader’s presentation were particularly revealing of the leader’s ethics?

3. Which factors of ethical leadership (character, actions, goals, honesty, power, and values) were most apparent in

the leader’s presentation? Discuss.

4. On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you describe this speaker’s ethical leadership? Defend your answer.

**Reflection and Action Worksheet**

Ethical Leadership

Reflection

1. This chapter suggests that leadership has a moral dimension and that leaders have a responsibility to use their

authority for the common good. Do you agree? Discuss.

2. When you consider the character of a leader and what a leader does (the leader’s actions), which of these

two factors is more important with regard to ethical leadership? Can a person with bad character be an ethical

leader? Discuss your answers.

3. In this chapter, the circumstances at Abu Ghraib prison are used as an example of unethical leadership. Do you

agree with this assessment? How do you view what happened at Abu Ghraib? What factors explain the leadership

ethics in this situation?

4. This chapter includes a story about Richard Lee, the father who coached his son’s Little League baseball

team. What was your reaction to the story? Do you think Richard was an ethical leader? How would you have

responded in this situation?

Action

1. Based on your responses to the Ethical Leadership Styles Questionnaire, what are your core values? Do you

think other people know your core values? Are you comfortable talking about these values with others? In your

planning for the future (e.g., next five years), how will your values influence what you do? Discuss.

2. Character is a fundamental aspect of ethical leadership. What are your character strengths and weaknesses?

List three specific actions you could take to strengthen your character.

3. In the Observational Exercise (12.3), you observed and analyzed the ethical leadership of a specific leader. If

you were to apply the same analysis to your own leadership, how would you describe yourself? What factors

best explain the ethics of your own leadership? If you were to try to become a more ethical leader, what specific

changes should you make in your leadership? Discuss.