

June 2012 Leadership Challenge Worksheet

DUE no later than Monday June 11th!

Leadership is a role that is sometimes designated through a job assignment or it can be a role someone assumes within an organization when he or she is willing to lead change or address a problem. To assure that the **Leadership Institute** has the most impact for you, we ask each participant to submit in advance a challenge that you face as a leader within your organization (something that must be changed, a problem or threat that needs to be addressed, and/or something that will make things better in a significant way for the people your organization assists/serves/supports).

This challenge will become the subject of some of your work during the Leadership Institute and beyond. Focusing on an organizational challenge will provide an opportunity to explore options with the support of the Institute faculty and participants. You will give the challenge a considerable amount of thought over our time together and you will leave with not only a plan for addressing the challenge, but with knowledge and skills that will strengthen you as a leader and a network of relationships on which you can draw for future guidance.

PLEASE NOTE: Your leadership challenge should not be a project you want to start. Most people have ideas for something new they'd like to do -- while there may be a need for any number of organizational or new service projects, we are looking for something related to moving your organization or your part of the organization forward in positive directions and in big ways. Are there issues internal to the way things function within your organization that are of concern? What are the biggest challenges that need to be addressed? We want you to work from your perspective as a leader in your organization. **What is holding your organization back from being what you would like to see it become or accomplishing what you would like to see it accomplish?**

Think big – this is about transforming your organization or your part of the organization. Stuck? Or can't decide between several options? e-mail me (nweiss@udel.edu) and we can discuss!

Your challenge should meet the following criteria. It should describe:

- A real and significant challenge that your organization is facing or will face in the near future;
- A challenge that is within your scope as a leader to impact. That is, in the past people have suggested challenges that are really frustrations about a situation on which they are unlikely to be able to have any real impact (for example, 'people with disabilities are devalued by the community') – please describe a problem on which you can have real influence;
- A challenge that you can get to work on soon. While your organization may face issues that are some years off, your challenge should be something you can begin to address as soon as you return from the Leadership Institute;
- A challenge that will involve other people in the solution. While there are efforts that you can make on your own, you can only practice *leadership skills* when you are working with others.

Please return your completed worksheet to Nancy Weiss at nweiss@udel.edu no later than Friday, June 11th!

Please note – No need for lots of writing. Your responses can be bulleted statements or a short paragraph. Try to limit each response to just 1-3 sentences.

YOUR NAME:

- 1. Describe the Leadership Challenge on which you have selected to work:**
 - 2. Why will making change or addressing the problem be important – to the people your organization assists/supports? To the organization? To staff within your organization? To the community? And/or to you?**
 - 3. Describe what the ideal solution might look like – if you were able to snap your fingers and fix or solve the problem entirely – what would be different?**
 - 4. Discuss the obstacles to making change or addressing the problem. What aspects of the project do you think will be difficult or frustrating? Include any personal, professional, or organizational risks that may be involved.**
 - 5. Have you already tried any strategies to effect change or address the problem? Discuss:**
 - 6. List who you would need to involve or engage to effect positive change or to fully address the problem:**

Adapted from: Kouzes, J. & Posner, B. (2003). *The Leadership Challenge Workbook*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.