Matthew Grady
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Dr. Hobbs

Instruction and Leadership Reflection

Instruction

These past 15 days I have learned a lot. Specific situations are still coming back to me from the field where then I might have blown it off, but now I realize that it was a learning moment. When it comes to the basic instructional strategies I find some easier than others to implement. Before teaching or ever giving instruction I feel that recognition of the groups culture and atmosphere is vital to the steps that follow. I found that accurately assessing the group in our phase 1 trip was quite easy. I think this was probably due to the fact that we are all such good friends and know how to handle each other. I feel that with a group of first time participants it may not be as simple. I look forward to the challenge of assessing group culture over many diverse groups in the future.

For me "creating the need" is key. As a participant when someone creates a need within their lesson, personally I've been drawn in they've got my attention. For this reason I find it easier to create a need in my lesson for my participants. During Chris and my self's lesson on weather we framed with. "In phase 2 we are all going to be out in the wilderness within our patrols, and we need to be aware of the weather signs." With this there was instantly a need for participants to be able to recognize weather patterns.

For me implementing a confirmation of learning is a hit or miss. During my short lesson on water treatment, I had participants split into groups and discuss the pros and cons/characteristics of specific treatment methods. Following the small group discussions I had each group share their findings with the entire group, a great confirmation of learning. During our long lesson Chris and I had two participant groups act out the movements of a warm and cold front. Just because they could act out a weather pattern doesn't mean they have actually learned it, does it? Confirmation of learning is one area that I struggle with.

Creating a balance of challenge and skill is also an area I similarly have a hard time with. In my water treatment lesson the participant discussion and then relaying that information to the group was a great balance of challenge and skill. But during the weather lesson we had participants play a matching game from their childhood. The information itself may have been challenging, but afterward I felt that there was no balance in our method. There are many more basic strategies that I now realize need to be implemented. With more time and practice I hope to become more efficient in implementing these practices in my instruction.

The SPEC approach is very easy to comprehend. Once I figured it out I felt as though I could easily incorporate it into my lessons. Student centered. Within my water treatment topic the lesson itself was not lecture heavy it was more participant involved with discussion. Problem based. Within our weather lesson I felt that Chris and I could have implemented a more problem-based activity i.e. following our introduction of the cloud types we could have had participants call out clouds as they see them in the sky. I realize that implementing a problem-based scenario is key but choosing an appropriate problem is where I struggle.

Experiential is the fun part. In the weather lesson we had participants act out the cold and warm fronts. For some this experiential skit may have been a learning block for them to pull from in the future. In my water treatment lesson there wasn't an active experiential piece, but the collaborative discussion effort within the groups may have been enough for participants. Collaboration among group members is the most effective way for me to learn. It allows for discussion among many viewpoints and deeper understanding of the topic.

For me to further improve my field instruction I need to work on closing out my blocks. Closing has been a reoccurring issue among phase 1 & 2 that I continually received feedback on. I have realized that when it comes to the end of the block I tend to check out. "I've put in the work, I framed it well, now ill let them run with it." This is where I'm wrong. In order for me to have an affective lesson I need to wrap it up bring back around the main points, clear up any issues and resolve the closing.

Leadership

Everyones leadership styles are different. I tend to fall in the "water" side of No-Doze's leadership outline. Specifically in the architects and analysis quadrant. Before I make any decisions I like to have all of the critical information pertaining to the situation before me. It gives me a sense of confidence in knowing that if I have all the information in-order to make the best decision. People's leadership styles are ever changing and very specific to themselves. Often they tend to overlap or pull from multiple quadrants.

Along with architect and analysts I also tend to pull from the relationship quadrant. Like mentioned before I tend to learn more from small groups while gaining information from others. It is my hope that incorporating small groups into my leadership will help others, like myself, to gain information from other participants. On Wes and myself's LOD we had participants do any and all discussion within small groups. This was intentional and I hope that the groups gained a further understand from each other.

The biggest stretch for me is moving over to the wind side of the graph specifically the drivers' quadrant. It's not like me to give out information or state my opinion, what if I'm wrong? It's hard for me to assert myself and tell people what to do. This can also affect me on how I see other peoples as leaders. When drivers are in their leadership role and they are throwing around their opinions and their orders on what I need to do. This easily agitates me. I realize I need to work on accepting others how they are in their specific leadership roles.

I struggle with being a spontaneous motivator, but am jealous of theses people at the same time. They are hilarious. They will let you know what they think right away, but I've noticed it tends to be in a lighthearted manor unlike the drives that come off as very serious. Spontaneous motivators in my opinion can sometimes be the most effective. It's either a hit or a miss. They'll start with letting the group know what they think. If they win the groups attention then they're got the group on board. If the group is skeptical and have their own opinions, do these folks then check out and disregard that leader? I struggle with identifying the in-between style of leadership amongst the wind side of the graph.

During my LOD day there were some very stressful situations. For me Wes is very hard to work with. I feel we have similar leadership styles, but that in itself is the problem. Which one of us going to step up? Who is going to take charge, and inform the

participants? But we rolled with it. In some situations were I felt I had a handle on things, I stepped up and took charge. In other areas I felt that Wes might have had the upper had, of course he never would have let it be known that he had the upper hand, but I sensed that he did and let him step up and take charge. It was a very interesting dynamic to watch play out. During these stressful situations I have step back and collect my thoughts, analyze what's going on, and figure out what I need to do next and so on. In these situations I could easily be mistaken as a recluse, but in all honesty I am intuitively thinking things out.

Judgment as an outdoor leader is very important. A quick judgment call in times of stress could lead to a wrong decision. With more time in the field an outdoor leaders judgment will steadily become more consciously competent. This is how I feel currently I haven't had to make any substantial judgment calls but I am sure that day will come. With more time in the field with a diverse group of participants my judgment will hopefully become sound.

Some of the areas that I feel confident in are: outdoor living, planning & logistics, and I am slowly feeling more confident in my leadership abilities. The areas I feel more weakness towards are risk management and education. When it comes to risk management I feel that I need to implement some sort of guidelines for myself. So that regardless of the group of participants I now would have a set of guidelines that I can follow for myself to manage any surreal risk they may encounter.

When it comes to education I feel that I need to spend more time implementing and obtaining a better understanding of theories and practices with myself before I can implement them and teach to participants.

In order for me to better my field leadership abilities, I need to find a way to cater to all participants and their leadership styles, specifically the drivers. Stress can get to all of us, but in order for me to have a less stressful time myself I need to show up more prepared, know what's going on, and be ready to go. Also I need to further my education, learning, and fully understanding theories in the classroom so that I can implement them in the field when needed.