

NEW MEXICO 4-H

Aggie Next Step

Leadership in Practice



Post Secondary Pathways



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Leadership in Practice

INTRODUCTION

Being a leader isn't about having a title – it's about how you influence and support others. In this lesson, participants will explore key leadership traits, practice decision-making through problem-solving scenarios, and build trust and communication in team-based activities. They will learn how strong leadership grows from collaboration, self-awareness, and the courage to take initiative.

SET UP

Review lesson materials and determine which worksheets and handouts you will use for the lesson. Print enough pre/post assessments, worksheets, and handouts for each participant.

ACTIVITY

1. Have participants complete the *Pre-assessment*.
2. Group participants in small groups of 3-4. Distribute *Leadership Traits* and allow them time to mark each trait as "essential," "helpful," or "not a leadership trait." Encourage discussion within groups. Wrap-up with a group discussion:
Q: Which "not a leadership trait" surprise you? Did anyone check it differently?
Q: Which traits had the most mixed answers? Why?
Q: If you had to pick 3 traits from the whole list to define a good leader, which would you choose and why?
3. Distribute *Problem-Solving Challenge* to each group. Read the instructions and assign 1 scenario to each small group (or pair). Allow time for participants to discuss and complete the worksheet.

Supplies

- Worksheets
- Handouts
- Pens/Pencils

OUTCOMES

Students will be able to:

- **Identify** key traits of effective leaders and explain why they matter.
- **Demonstrate** leadership skills such as communication, problem-solving, and decision-making.
- **Apply** critical thinking to analyze and respond to real-world leadership scenarios.
- **Collaborate** with peers to complete challenges that require trust, strategy, and shared responsibility.



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4. Play *Minefield* team-building game. This game requires blindfolds and minimal setup.
5. After all students have had a chance to be the guide, debrief with these discussion questions:

Q: How much did you have to trust your partner?

Q: What made the directions clear or confusing?

Q: How does this connect to leadership and teamwork in real life?

6. Distribute the *Leadership Traits Inventory* and allow participants time to rate and reflect. This may also be assigned as independent work if time is short.
7. *Exit Ticket* – depending on time, this can be done as a class discussion, or students can complete the worksheet in class, as homework, or in the following class.

7. Have participants complete *Post-assessment*.

WRAP UP

Leadership grows through practice and reflection. Each challenge in this lesson helps you recognize that everyone has the potential to lead—by listening, guiding, and working together toward a common goal.

LESSON EXTENSION

If time allows, use the *Sneak Peak* activity to practice leadership and teamwork skills. This would be a great lesson extension or an introduction to this lesson. Note that you will need additional supplies for this activity.



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RESOURCES

NM Standards:

NM PED Standards: Career and Technical Education (CTE):

CTE 2.1.2: demonstrate use of the concepts, strategies, and systems to enhance communication in the workplace

CTE 2.1.9: Listen to and speak with diverse individuals to enhance communication skills

CTE 7.1.3: Employ teamwork skills to achieve collective goals

CTE 9.1.1: Identify and demonstrate the use of positive work behaviors and personal qualities needed to be employable

Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) Standards: Career Ready Practices (CRP):

CRP-1: Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee

CRP-4: Communicate clearly, effectively, and with reason

CRP-9: Model integrity, ethical leadership, and effective management

CRP-12: Work Productively in teams while using cultural/global competence

Optional ELA Alignment (Grades 6-12)

SL1: Participate in a range of conversations and collaborations

Video Resources:

Note: Please preview all videos before showing them to students to ensure they are age-appropriate, relevant, and aligned with your classroom needs.

What Makes a Great Leader \ Youth Speak

<https://youtu.be/bpcusZxgTw4?si=3uoHcOWQLrYU1Tym>

Kid President Asks "What Makes an Awesome Leader?"

https://youtu.be/KdL4o7wU0CQ?si=2TSLs_suddqWTd9X