

SUPPLEMENTAL TWO

BUILDING YOUR PLATFORM ON ENGAGED LEADERSHIP

What follows is an explanation of creating a Platform. I want to begin with two important considerations that should influence your writing.

- This Platform is yours, you are not explaining what all individuals should believe or do. You will be talking about your own beliefs. Therefore, keep it in your voice and completely centered on the first person singular. Write it as though you and I are sitting comfortably discussing the complexities of Engaged Leadership as they relate to the political, economic and social-cultural issues of society.
- It has been argued that one's ideas, thoughts, beliefs and opinions can best be shared via narratives. You may find it useful to illustrate your points through stories. Your stories are the context and meaning of your thoughts on Engaged Leadership.

Underlying a Platform on Engaged Leadership

Parker Palmer informs our work: “When we choose to engage, not evade, the tension of our differences, we will become better equipped to participate in a government of, by, and for the people as we expand some of our key civic capacities:

- To listen to each other openly and without fear, learning how much we have in common despite our differences
- To deepen our empathy for the alien “other” as we enter imaginatively into the experiences of people whose lives are radically unlike our own
- To hold what we believe and know with conviction and be willing to listen openly to other viewpoints, changing our minds if needed
- To seek our alternative facts and explanations whenever we find reason to doubt our own truth claims or the claims made by others, thus becoming better informed
- To probe, question, explore, and engage in dialogue, developing a fuller, more three-dimensional view of reality in the process
- To enter the conflicted arena of politics, able to hold the dynamics of that complex force field in ways that unite the civic community and empower us to hold governmental accountable to the will of the people
- To welcome opportunities to participate in collective problem solving and decision making, generating better solutions and making better decisions as we work with competing ideas
- To feel more at home on the face of the earth amid differences and many sorts, better able to enjoy the fruits of diversity.

Palmer, 2011, p. 14

The Platform

It is tempting to view notions of engaged leadership from a purely scientific or maybe even from some set of clearly understood rules. In reality, however, notions of engaged leadership are very complex. A platform implies something that supports one's beliefs and by which one justifies or validates one's own actions. A platform on Engaged Leadership helps an individual bring to the fore his/her thoughts on this complex issue and often brings clarity to much needed change. Your platform should address the following questions.

1. What are the major attributes that determine one's identity and why?
2. What are the political, economic, and social-cultural factors that impact one's thinking about differences among individuals?
3. Given the answers to the first two questions, how have your thoughts about diversity, inclusion and engaged leadership changed and how will your answers cause you to become a stronger advocate for a better society and world, for all?

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