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## PREFACE

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The purpose of this book is to help you understand the concept of leadership and to apply current theories of leadership to your personal life and teaching. If you are in a position to influence others—fellow teachers or students, to give directions, or to have people follow you—then you are a leader. Understanding, valuing and developing that leadership is what this book is all about.

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## INTRODUCTION

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# Leadership: A Special Type of Giftedness

Interest in leadership can be traced as far back as the early efforts of Plato and Aristotle, who explored identifying and developing leadership ability. Today, evidence of current interest can be tallied in a number of articles and books on the topic, such as Passow (1982), Gallagher (1983), Addison (1984), Feldhusen (1986), Sisk (1985, 1986), Sisk and Shallcross (1987). Notably, leadership was included in the 1972 United States federal definition of giftedness; yet leadership is still the new kid on the educational block, in spite of the fact that most people recognize the need for leaders. *Time* magazine ran a lead article on the need for leaders in 1979 and again in 1984 as a follow-up article entitled, "The Cry for Leaders." Their conclusion was if global society is to survive with positive human conditions, the cry for leaders must be heard and leadership must be developed.

In an effort to identify and develop leadership, a Center for Creativity, Innovation and Leadership (CCIL) was established at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida. This Center provides leadership training for children, youth and adults and conducts research on training questions and issues. CCIL was established in 1981 with state funds and is partially supported with private foundation funds. The Center has sponsored leadership training for educators, business and professional individuals and others throughout the United States and in a number of foreign countries, notably Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, Israel, Portugal, the Philippines, South Africa and Mexico. In addition, each summer two residential leadership programs are offered for middle school and high school youth, as well as a summer day program for ages 4-14 year-olds. Many of the activities in this book have been field tested with either the children and the youth in leadership programs or with the participants in seminars conducted by CCIL.

*Leadership: A Special Type of Giftedness* focuses in Part I on examining the definition of leadership, the theories behind leadership, such as the trait theory, leadership style and situational theory. Part II includes a leadership

model developed by Sisk (1985) for planning and developing leadership training activities. Part III presents exemplary activities to develop leadership, and provides a brief summary and exploration of a number of teaching/learning models. Part IV addresses Issues and Trends in Leadership.

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## PART I

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# Defining Leadership

In examining the research literature on leadership for possible working definitions, we found almost as many definitions of leadership as there were persons writing about the concept of leadership. Definitions include:

“Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement” (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969).

“Leadership is the ability to gain consensus and commitment to common objectives, beyond organizational requirements, which are attained with the experience of contribution and satisfaction on the part of the work group” (Cribben, 1981).

“Leadership is the avenue to the achievement of our personal and corporate goals” (Calloway, 1985).

“Leadership is an ability which may lead to a better job, to more security and self-confidence and to greater service to society as a whole” (Richardson & Feldhusen, 1984).

As different as the definitions may appear, there are several common themes. Leadership does involve the influencing of others toward individual or group efforts and does require persistence, forecasting, problem solving and the implementation of action. The variety of definitions are based on three major theories of leadership. An examination of these theories is useful to fully understand the concept of leadership, and to plan and initiate programs that can identify and develop leadership potential in children, youth and adults.

## ***Trait Theory***

The trait theory is one of the oldest theories of leadership and is often referred to as the Great Man Theory. The trait theory can be traced back to the early work of Aristotle and consequently, many people thought leaders were born. The trait theory was readily accepted in psychology for years and trait lists were often referred to as ways to differentiate leaders from non-leaders.

Directors and teachers in gifted programs who choose to view leadership as specific behaviors or traits can use task roles in group dynamic activities to screen and identify leadership. These task roles can also be used as training activities in leadership programs. Examples of task roles are listed below. Check the task roles that you feel you want to emphasize in your leadership program.

### ***Task Roles***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Information/Opinion Giver
- \_\_\_\_\_ Information/Opinion Seeker
- \_\_\_\_\_ Initiator
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consensus or Synthesizer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Organizer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clarifier
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recorder
- \_\_\_\_\_ Summarizer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Energizer

Task roles such as those listed are facilitating ones that enable groups or individuals to complete a task. For example, the information/opinion giver shares facts and relevant information; the information/opinion seeker seeks relevant information; the initiator starts tasks and suggests procedure; the consensus or synthesizer polls the group to seek agreement; the organizer keeps the group on task and calls for a schedule; the clarifier interprets ideas and suggestions; the recorder maintains records; the summarizer synthesizes