5 Extracurricular Activities That Will Boost Your Leadership Skills

If you are a Masters student but feel that your leadership potential remains largely untested by the fixed curriculum, there are some extracurricular activities that will help awaken the leader in you.

An extracurricular activity is an activity that is not required by the course of study at your university. They are not obligatory but are invaluable in developing your talents and practical skills. Some of these activities, such as fundraising and volunteering, not only benefit you but also help others.

Leadership growth is related to self-discovery. Any kind of team work will help you get aware of your strengths and the team roles that you are naturally comfortable with. Being able to follow a leader and be a valuable team player is equally essential for achievement and success.

There are many possibilities out there that can help you develop your leadership skills. Here are five of them:

Carry out your own project

Leading a project in your area of interest is a great way for you to gain some leadership experience. Since organising and leading a project is no mean feat, you would be well advised to first participate in a project run by someone else. That way you can learn how to organise a successful event or fundraise. After you’ve gained enough experience and worked up the courage to do your own project, you should start enlisting help by, for example, asking your classmates if they would like to participate.

There are many possible projects that you can start, but fundraising is one of the most rewarding extracurricular activities if you want to hone your leadership skills. Make no mistake: it won’t be easy. Organising an auction for a homeless shelter, the victims of a natural disaster, or a person in need requires not only leadership but also management skills. Fundraising is a great extracurricular activity because it not only allows you to tap into your leadership potential but also to help others in need.

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Do volunteer work

You may be wondering how volunteering may give you the chance to apply your leadership skills, but the fact is that this kind of extracurricular activity may help you do that in more ways than one. However, there is a caveat: choose a volunteering opportunity that you are really passionate about. Don’t do it just because it will help you.

So, how does volunteering help you become a better leader? First, the mere decision to participate in a volunteering endeavour highlights a sense of maturity and responsibility, two essential qualities for a leader. Volunteering will also most likely get you out of your comfort zone because you will be working with new people and face various challenges. You will also have the chance to develop soft skills such as the ability to listen and communicate clearly. You may also encounter examples of great leadership because you will be in contact with people from all walks of life and chances are that there might be people you can learn a lot from.

Join a sports team

All sports teams require a leader or a number of players possessing leadership skills. That’s why joining a team is one of the best ways for you to demonstrate your leadership potential. Football, hockey, basketball – it’s up to you to choose. Of course, leadership is not only
limited to the field. If you are more interested in the strategic side of the game, you could become a coach of a children’s team. Being on the side lines will test your leadership skills even more, because you will not only have to be a source of inspiration, but also possess an array of management and soft skills.

Get involved in student politics

If you feel that sport is not for you and that you will be a bigger asset to society as the next prime minister, you should consider getting involved in student politics. Opportunities in governance may not be as numerous as you would like, but they should be sufficient if you are in the habit of getting involved in various activities. For example, you can join the debating society, or the school newspaper, communities, or political groups. It will only do you good to get your voice heard and show that you care.

Read: What Employers Look for in Masters Graduates

Join the student council

Student councils come in many different shapes and forms around the world. They are basically organisations of students within a school that represent the interests of the students who study there. However, joining a student council is not easy. You have to be elected by your classmates, which means that you should have demonstrated your leadership skills beforehand. The student council constitutes a very good extracurricular activity because it brings together natural leaders who can learn from each other and face challenges together.

Involvement in student councils instantly sets you apart as a responsible, engaged student who knows how to solve problems and represent a wider group of people. Besides, being a student council member looks great on your CV and is viewed favourably by admissions' officers and employers alike.

As you see, there is a myriad of extracurricular activities that can enable you to develop your leadership skills. It’s a matter of choice really – you just have to follow your passion and interests. Activities that take place outside the regular school timetable will surely aid you in your future job search or entrepreneurship endeavours, but they will, above all, help you become a better leader and, by extension, a better person. There is also the added benefit of working for the common good. Do not hesitate, act now!