



Woodson Principles

Activities & Assignments

Competence

Look first among people suffering the problem for a solution. Then rely on the practical knowledge of those living in the same geographic and cultural zip code as the people experiencing the problem, instead of lofty ideas from distant “experts.”

I have experienced/seen competence when _____.

I could demonstrate competence by _____.

Integrity

Relationships are the necessary condition for transforming others, and trust is the common currency. Before you can help others, you need to consider your personal motives and level of commitment. Then, seek out leaders that are moral practitioners of virtue, honesty, and integrity and who are trustworthy and honest.

I have experienced/seen integrity when _____.

I could demonstrate integrity by _____.

Transparency

Leaders willingly open up and share their triumphs over challenges they have faced in their lives, describing how they overcame brokenness and suffering. This is how they build trust. They refuse to hide behind their pain or their pride, instead offering up stories of their struggles with humility in the interest of establishing trust.

I have experienced/seen transparency when _____.

I could demonstrate transparency by _____.

Resilience

In searching for healing agents within toxic communities, study those who are “in” troubled circumstances but not “of” those circumstances—those who have managed to survive and thrive—to discover the secret of their success.

I have experienced/seen resilience when _____.

I could demonstrate resilience by _____.



Witness

Look for those who have overcome hardship. They possess more credibility with the lost and struggling than the most accomplished experts. For example, those who are in recovery from an addiction are living proof that recovery is possible.

I have experienced/seen witness when _____.

I could demonstrate witness by _____.

Innovation

In our market economy, just three percent of people are entrepreneurs, but they create 70% of all new jobs. In like manner, a small percentage of social entrepreneurs can generate large-scale changes and improvements in the social economy, and their innovative ideas are by far the most effective. Empower the leaders and leverage the skills that are already available in the neighborhood.

I have experienced/seen innovation when _____.

I could demonstrate innovation by _____.

Inspiration

You can learn nothing from studying failure except how to create failure. Recognize the capacity that people possess. People are inspired to improve when they are presented with victories that are possible, not injuries to be avoided. Provide them with the tools for self-determination and help them strive to succeed above all reasonable expectations. Then, look for ways to celebrate even modest improvements.

I have experienced/seen inspiration when _____.

I could demonstrate inspiration by _____.

Agency

No one should have to surrender his or her dignity as a condition for receiving help. Unconditional giving leads to pity rather than the desire to succeed. People should be agents of their own uplift. Never do more for them than they are willing to do for themselves. There must be reciprocity as the framework of any meaningful relationship. In other words, a person should be given the opportunity to give in return for what is received.

I have experienced/seen agency when _____.

I could demonstrate agency by _____.



Access

Eliminate barriers to access and serve all who suffer. Support small, positive change. People must be given the tools to take advantage of the opportunities presented to them.

I have experienced/seen access when _____.

I could demonstrate access by _____.

Grace

Love and respect others, even when it's inconvenient. Look at neighborhoods as filled with people who have potential, not dysfunctional victims. Be free of bitterness, regret, and uncertainty about the future.

I have experienced/seen grace when _____.

I could demonstrate grace by _____.

Questions

Which ones were easiest and fastest for you to complete? Which were hardest?

Are there any you couldn't complete? Compare and exchange responses with a classmate so that you both have examples for each of the 10 principles.

If you were to make up your own list of 5 personal traits and qualities that lead to happiness and success in life, what would they be?

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 2. |
| 3. | 4. |
| 5. | |

Imagine that you are a neighborhood empowerment expert in your community. What types of people would you like to serve and assist?

What sorts of programs would you like to see started in your neighborhood or your community?

Are you familiar with any community programs in your neighborhood? Have you ever visited any of them? What are they doing well? What could they be doing better?

List at least 3 needs that exist in your town or community that could stand improvement:

Vocabulary

Capacity, Agency, Reciprocity