

PRIORITIZING YOUR LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Youth First Initiative



MY PERSONAL JOURNEY...

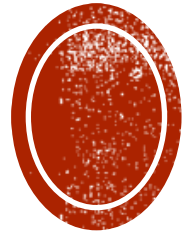
- Gangs, drugs, abusive and unstable household
- Arrested and convicted for Attempted Murder and sentenced to 2-6 years.
- While incarcerated obtained a GED and 57 college credits.
- Worked custodial maintenance, kitchen, library, and mentored.
- Released June 12 with \$50 cash, a train ticket, a parole office address, a B felony conviction, and my education.
- Difficulty obtaining jobs and getting into college
- Realized that the only way to make a difference was to speak up and make difference myself
- Jumped into advocacy work and quickly became a leader in the work with very little support personally and professionally



MY PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY...

- Started of by doing administrative work at a legal office, volunteering everywhere, and sharing my story of incarceration everywhere
- Moved into a research internship at the Vera Institute of Justice
- Negotiated a part-time role after internship through the work that I did at Vera
- Connected everything I was doing outside of work to youth justice
- Started joining boards and other groups at the local, state, and national level
- Upon finishing my bachelors degree, took on a full time Program Analyst role at Vera Institute
- Realized that my personal story wasn't all I had. I had learned to do research, facilitate trainings, speak publicly, develop programming, and so much more.





WHAT IS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?



WEB DEFINITION...

- Process of improving and increasing capabilities of staff through access to education and training opportunities in the workplace, through outside organization, or through watching others perform the job. Professional development helps build and maintain morale of staff members, and is thought to attract higher quality staff to an organization. Also called staff development.



IN SIMPLE TERMS...

- Learning what you need, to be good at what you do... or to grow into what you want to be.





**WHAT ARE SOME
EXAMPLES OF
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT?**

EXAMPLES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT...

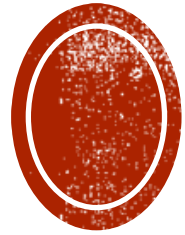
- **Continuing Education**
 - Enrollment in formal degree programs, courses, or workshops
 - Pursuing certificates, accreditations or other credentials through educational programs
- **Research**
 - Conducting research
 - Presenting findings of research to others
- **Improve job performance**
 - Keeping up with technology, systems, processes
 - Learning about new developments
 - Improving existing skills



EXAMPLES CONTINUED . . .

- **Participation in professional organizations**
 - Attending local, regional, national, and international meetings, conferences and workshops sponsored by professional organizations
 - Presenting papers at conferences and workshops
 - Serving as an officer, board member, or committee member
 - Coordinating events sponsored by the organization
- **Increased duties and responsibilities**
 - Taking on new challenges in current position, projects, long or short-term assignments





WHY IS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPORTANT FOR YOUNG LEADERS?



YOUNG AND IN LEADERSHIP WITHOUT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT...

- Youngest person in a room full of decision-makers
- Only one without a degree or title behind my name
- Consistently needing to be cosigned by someone with more experience to be taken seriously
- Treated like you don't understand just because you are young
- Constantly needing to catch up in conversations because I lacked the skill or knowledge to be able to keep up in the room
- Made decisions about career without much support and ultimately rushed through a lot of amazing opportunities



HOW TO BE TAKEN SERIOUS AS A YOUNG LEADER...

- 1. START WITH A CAREER STRATEGY**
- 2. FIGURE OUT WHAT YOUR DRIVING PRINCIPLES/VALUES ARE**
- 3. MASTER SOCIAL AS A BRANDING TOOL**
- 4. DEVELOP BRANDING IN REAL LIFE**
 - Dress for the occasion
 - Learn public speaking skills
 - Expand your self-worth
 - Two-way mentoring/Coaching
- 5. SHOWING UP IS NOT ENOUGH**



TWO-WAY MENTORING / COACHING

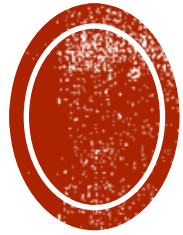
- Rather than traditional one-way mentoring, seek out older leaders who can learn from you. While they are a tremendous resource for experience, wisdom and guidance, you are also a mentor of value related to new ideas, technology, etc.



PRIORITIZING YOUR OWN DEVELOPMENT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE...

- You are investing in your future
- You become a stronger leader personally and professionally
- You are opening doors to different opportunities by expanding your skills
- You are developing your own brand
- You are finding what your “niche” is (a.k.a. what you are good at)
- You begin to fully contribute within the larger movement





HOW CAN ADULT ALLIES SUPPORT YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

HOW DO ADULT ALLIES SUPPORT...

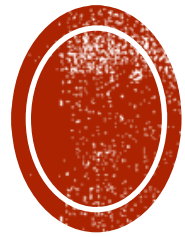
- Providing intentional opportunities for young leaders to receive professional development
- Setting aside funds to send young leaders to professional development trainings and/or conferences
- Be intentional about supervision, coaching, and build a plan with young leaders
- Create intentional space for young leaders to learn about and own their power
- Seek out opportunities to intentionally mentor and support the leadership of an emerging leader close to you
- Recognize that young leaders need support. Don't forget you was once there too.



HOW CAN YOUNG LEADERS TAP INTO THE EXPERIENCE OF ADULT ALLIES...

- Schedules times to meet with adult allies to learn more about their professional journeys
- Connect with adult allies who share similar backgrounds to you but be open to connecting with others
- Ask directly for mentorship from people whose leadership you'd like to model
- Ask for feedback from adult allies to identify areas where you might need growth
- Understand that adult allies come with their own way of doing things so be prepared to learn and create your own style





**WHAT PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
OPPORTUNITIES EXIST
OUT THERE?**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PD IN THE YOUTH JUSTICE SPACE INCLUDE...

- Local and national conferences (networking opportunities)
 - National Juvenile Justice Network
 - CJJ
 - Cities United
 - Campaign for the fair Sentencing of Youth
- Local and national trainings on:
 - Organizing
 - Legislative advocacy
 - Public speaking
 - Etc.
- State Advisory Boards
- College Student organizations



OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED...

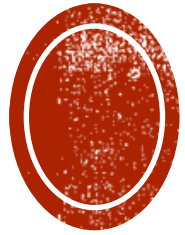
- Writing Opinion Editorial pieces
- Non-profit boards
- Variety of fellowships:
 - Soros
 - Echoing Green
 - NJJN Youth Justice Leadership Institute
 - JustleadershipUSA Leading with Conviction
 - New Leaders Council
- So much more!



THE POWER OF NETWORKING IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT...

- Opportunity to connect with and meet others doing similar work
- Opportunities to collaborate with other leaders on different projects
- Exposes you to other professional development opportunities because people know who you are and what you are about
- Its about what you know, and who you know





NETWORKING ACTIVITY



YOU ARE MORE THAN YOUR PAST...

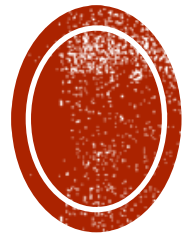
- You are more than your story of incarceration
- Build, recreate, and honor yourself
- Challenge your own learning and thinking every day
- Remember that you too can be the leader a system or fortune 500 company



BREAKTHROUGH ACTION LEADERSHIP

- Responsibility
 - Be responsible for the results that you are producing
- Self-reflection (accept feedback)
 - Look at the source of your actions in the results you have produced, and seek out and accept feedback when you cannot see that source clearly
- Collective leadership (build leaders around you)
 - Invest in the leadership of those around you





QUESTIONS?

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