

DeGraaf, D. G., Jordan, D. J. , & DeGraaf, K H. (1999). *Programming for parks, recreation, and leisure services: A servant leadership approach and steps to successful programming; A student handbook to accompany programming for parks, recreation, and leisure services: A servant leadership approach*. State College, PA: Venture.

Reviewed by

Rob Stiefvater, PhD  
North Carolina Central University

### **Biographical Information**

*Rob Stiefvater is an Assistant Professor at North Carolina Central University's Department of Physical Education and Recreation. He is also the Associate Editor/Web Master for LARNet; The Cyber Journal of Applied Leisure and Recreation Research-[www.nccu.edu/larnet/larnet.htm](http://www.nccu.edu/larnet/larnet.htm)*

The adage that one should not judge a book by its cover is sound, however, in this case the cover provides insight to the book's contents. The cover art juxtaposes a CD-ROM with that of lined notebook paper and a sprig of flower, and in so doing, reaches out to Generations X and Y\*, to which technology is an essential teaching medium. The cover symbolizes a willingness to embrace technological advancement, while acknowledging the benefit of, and our foundation in the traditional academic approach.

The cover is illustrative of the authors' fundamental message of Servant Leadership—reaching out in service. Indeed, I was surprised to find that a student handbook accompanies the text, rather than the more traditional instructor's guide. The student's companion volume, Steps to Successful Programming: A Student Handbook to Accompany Programming for Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Services: A Servant Leadership Approach, is organized to correspond with the text. The handbook includes the sections; learning objectives, key concepts and terms, questions for study, suggested applications, program development, and a very interesting section entitled "Reflections."

Reflections seeks to guide students toward practical application of each content area. The diversity and the depth of this section is thought provoking, asking students to, among other things, contemplate the privilege of being white, compare evaluation forms, and reflect on a flow experience. The student handbook attempts to enhance the student's learning experience by utilizing an interactive and dynamic learning process. As an example of the authors' service to the student, the 140-page handbook is conveniently pre-punched for a three-ring binder.

\*Generation Y is defined as the 72 million children of the baby boomers who will first reach adulthood in the year 2000.

It is one thing to create a resource that appeals to students, however, it is quite another to create a resource that is not only appealing to instructors, but is also creative, current, competent, and comprehensive. Programming for Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Services: A Servant Leadership Approach accomplishes these requirements.

Servant Leadership is based on the premise that all recreation providers serve their customers through programs. The Servant Leadership approach simultaneously enhances the personal growth of individuals and improves the quality and caring of our many institutions through a combination of teamwork and community, personal involvement in decision making and ethical and caring behavior. I found this book to be very creative in that it interprets recreation programming through the Servant Leadership approach and the way in which the authors designed the text and handbook, encouraging students to emulate their lead. As an example, the author's generous use of charts, graphs, and illustrations seems to be a conscious attempt to reach out to a "dot com" generation of students, weaned on the WWW.

The text also presents a virtual blue print for ways in which programmers can become more creative themselves. For instance, Chapter Fourteen, "Innovation (and How to Find Inspiration)" provides many resources for programmers, including a nice section that catalogs 77 program books, 41 research and professional journals and magazines, and 16 professional organizations.

While remaining grounded in traditional recreation and leisure theories and recreational programming practices, this book incorporates many current concepts. The aforementioned Servant Leadership is an example. The integration of such concepts as diversity, empowerment, service, sexual orientation, are others. No book could claim to be current without addressing technology and the Internet. Both topical areas are well represented throughout the text.

This book also superbly communicates the core competencies of our field, the research augmenting the fundamental theme of the text, that of Servant Leadership. It is well researched, as demonstrated by 314 diverse references, which range from the Old Testament to the World Wide Web; Dr. Suess to the Sierra Club; Crompton to Drucker; Neulinger to Csikszentmihalyi. It is evident that a great deal of research went into making this a competent text.

I found this book, with its 14 chapters and 360 pages, to be very comprehensive. While building on the contributions of past programming texts from such authors as Russell, Kraus, Farrell and Lundegren, and Edginton, Hanson, Edginton, and Hudson, this book forges new ground by applying the concept of Servant Leadership to recreation programming. Each chapter incorporates the Servant Leadership Perspective into a traditional Program Planning Cycle. With the "Organizations Philosophy and Mission" at its core, the Program Planning Cycle used by the authors is composed of the following seven stages; Assess Participant Needs, Plan and Design Program, Engage in Pre-Pro-

gram Tasks, Implement Program, Conduct Formative Evaluations, Make Adjustments and Continue Implementation, and Conduct Summative Evaluation. Each chapter begins with an illustration indicating where that chapter falls in the Program Planning Cycle and concludes with a summary and a list of references used in that particular chapter.

The text begins with, as most good recreation/leisure texts do, an overview of "Basic Concepts," covering definitions, recreation programs, leisure service professionals, and concludes with a discussion of programming from the Servant Leadership approach. Chapter Two "Service and Quality in Programming," discusses the importance of an agency committing to quality and value, and incorporates the philosophy of programming as a service rather than a product.

Chapters Three and Four, "Programming Theories" and "Program Philosophy" outline various interdisciplinary concepts and relate them to the leisure service profession. The concepts of Foundation, Direction, and Reflection (FDR) as they relate to an organization's philosophy, values, traditions, mission, vision, goals, and objectives are presented nicely under the umbrella of the Servant Leadership perspective. The concepts of accountability, empathy, diversity, empowerment, community, integrity, and service are all detailed. These concepts are then readily integrated in Chapter Five, "Needs Assessment: The First Step," which presents a unique overview of needs assessment concepts from the Servant Leadership perspective.

Chapter Six, "Programming for People," takes a contemporary and frank approach to discussing stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination as they relate to ADA, sex/gender, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, physical/cognitive abilities and qualities, and life stages and age groups. This chapter explores how we as programmers are responsible for providing services to a wide and diverse group of people. I felt that this chapter, in particular, epitomizes the author's theme of Servant Leadership.

Chapters Five and Six address the first stage, "Assess Participant Needs," of the Program Planning Cycle. The "Plan and Design Program" stage is devoted entirely to Chapter Seven, "Program Design." In this chapter, the authors discuss the importance of creativity in program design. They indicate that not all people are creative, but that we all have the potential to be creative. They outline a number of strategies that one could utilize to increase one's creativity, such as brainstorming, discontinuity, and mind mapping, among others. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of a number of factors to consider in program design, e.g., program areas/formats, equipment and supplies, budget, risk management, staff-customer interaction, etc.

Stage Three of the Program Planning Cycle, "Engage in Pre-Program Tasks," is covered in Chapters Eight, through Ten. Specifically, those chapters detail "Program Promotion," "Pricing Program Services," and "Facilitating the Participants' Pre-Program Experience." The chapter dealing with promotion is wonderfully illustrated, integrating examples from a wide variety of leisure service agencies. Marketing and the Promo-

tional Mix is adeptly covered, as is emerging technology. The use of CD-ROMs, electronic kiosks, the Internet (including e-mail and the WWW) as promotional media is detailed. I found the sections "How to write effective copy for brochures," and "How to design effective brochures," to be very helpful and informative.

Chapter Nine takes the student through nine fundamental steps in pricing; trends, budgets, calculating overall costs/price potential, determining the proportion of costs, differential pricing, alternative funding (including sections on grant writing, partnerships, and "scrounging"), psychological dimensions of price, establishing the initial price, and price revision decisions. Chapter Ten examines the area of customer friendly systems, including the registration process, payment methods, travel, and dealing with customer dissatisfaction.

The "Implement Program" Stage of the Program Planning Cycle is addressed wholly in Chapter Eleven, "The Programmer." This chapter focuses on understanding who the programmer is and relates the concept of Servant Leadership to the role of the programmer. It discusses professionalism and outlines our many roles in service to: community, organization, staff, and constituents (users and nonusers). This chapter strongly characterizes the fundamental theme of Servant Leadership by detailing to whom we provide Servant Leadership and in what capacity.

Chapter Twelve, "The Essence of Program Evaluation," ably describes the "Conduct of Formative Evaluations" stage of the Program Planning Cycle. Basic evaluation concepts are presented and discussed. The sections detailing quantitative and qualitative paradigms and various evaluation models are delivered in a direct and easy to understand format. "Make Adjustments and Continue Implementation" is the next stage in the Program Planning Cycle. The authors did not specifically address it in this text and it is somewhat conspicuous by its absence, however, this does not diminish the book as a whole.

The final stage of the Program Planning Cycle is "Conduct Summative Evaluation," which is detailed in Chapter Thirteen, "Evaluation Tools, Techniques, and Data Analysis." This chapter presents a number of concepts (e.g., reliability, validity, qualitative/quantitative techniques, triangulation, inferential/descriptive analysis, etc.) that many students have difficulty with in a manner that is informative and easy to understand. It concludes with a useful section detailing the format in which to write the evaluation report.

The text concludes with Chapter Fourteen, "Innovation (and How to Find Inspiration)." While Chapter Seven looked at the importance of creativity and passion in designing programs, this chapter applies creativity and passion to how a recreation programmer conducts research and utilizes resources. It is a very comprehensive text, as further evidenced by an appendix that includes a break down or "how-to" section for tournament scheduling.

---

As recreation programmers, we program a wide variety of activities for a very diverse group of people. I feel that this text represents the range of programmatic areas in municipal, commercial and not-for-profit settings. Examples and illustrations of each are used throughout. I can not, however, recommend this text as a primary source for a therapeutic recreation program design class. While it does contain a great deal of information related to serving people with disabilities, TR is clearly not the focus of the text.

In summary, I recommend Programming for Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Services: A Servant Leadership Approach and the Steps to Successful Programming: A Student Handbook to Accompany Programming for Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Services: A Servant Leadership Approach. I found them both to be student oriented, informative, and entertaining. Moreover, as an instructor, I found that the authors have designed a text that is creative, current, competent, and comprehensive. Beyond its appeal to the student and instructor, I feel that the ultimate measure of a sound programming textbook is if it addresses NRPA/AALR accreditation competency standards. It does so and so much more.