



Maturing Leadership

*How Adult
Development
Impacts
Leadership*

Edited by
Jonathan Reams

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Maturing Leadership: How Adult Development Impacts Leadership

EDITED BY

JONATHAN REAMS



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Foreword

This is a book that deserves to be widely read by people interested in leadership education, research, and practice. Understanding leadership requires an understanding of those engaged in leadership, most of whom are adults. From this perspective, it seems obvious that having a better understanding of adult development could provide insights into leadership performance. This applies not only to positive leadership performance but also to understand factors contributing to negative aspects such as toxic leadership, abusive leadership, and leader derailment that may have its origins in adult development processes.

It is also the case that many developing leaders are embedded in ongoing adult development. The point is that for the most part developing leaders are also developing adults. We cannot fully understand the former without some insights into the latter. The need for a better understanding of adult development can potentially help provide better insights into how to design and deliver more effective leader development interventions and other related initiatives.

These are just a couple of reasons why the present edited volume is especially welcomed and useful. Leadership is enacted as part of a system that includes someone exercising leadership, others supporting that leadership, and the interpersonal context in which this is occurring. Adult development theory and research can help shed light on each of these three areas: the leader, those participating in leadership as followers, and the context in which shared work is happening. More fully considering various aspects of adult development processes has the potential of bringing light to each of these facets of leadership and its development that has been for the most part overlooked.

I encourage you to delve deeply into the various perspectives on adult development and leadership contained in this volume. Doing so should help promote new understandings of this age-old conundrum called leadership. It is also hoped that this is not the end of your journey in the integration of adult development and leadership, but the mere beginnings of a movement to understand the myriad ways in which developing as an adult can facilitate or impede effective leadership and its development.

David V. Day

August 2019

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