

**A Research Paper by Silver Oaks**  
on  
**Leadership Development**  
January 2013

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**DESIGN MODEL FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

- | Vision | Dr Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
- | IB Profile | Student Government | Leader in Me
- | A Day with the leader | Leadership Song | Ramleela
- | Mantras of Mahatma | Training children from disturbed backgrounds

**NOTE FROM SILVER OAKS**

In the realms of education that we dwell in, all our efforts are to raise a class of young people who will create a better world. Integrity and honesty are the aspirations we have for them. As a School we are striving to share our experiences with all those involved in educating people for a better world.

Our objective is to share and add to the knowledge pool.

We would be delighted to hear from those who appreciate our work and would like to use some of our design models in their realms of education.

Nothing can be more satisfying than the feeling that our experiences have come of use to someone somewhere.

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A Research Paper by Silver Oaks  
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January 2013

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## RESEARCH

A school is an ecosystem that nourishes and nurtures each child, establishing a network of responses, reactions and responsibilities.

To enable each child educate to become wiser, more knowledgeable, better informed, ethical, responsible, critical and capable of continuing to learn is the purpose and method of education.

Education is also the means for disseminating knowledge and developing skills, for bringing about desired changes in behaviours, values and lifestyles towards sustainability and living in harmony with oneself, others, society and the nature.

Education is the most effective means that society possesses for confronting the challenges of the future. Education will shape the world of tomorrow.

Progress increasingly depends upon the products of educated minds – assuming leadership in every walk of life. A leader is one who leads oneself and leads others.

As a school we assumed responsibility is to groom young people into good human beings who can lead themselves and others with character first and competence next.

Many opportunities are created for the students and teachers to bring out their innate talents through leadership skills, make them realise their potential and responsibilities towards self, others and the society at large.

**A Research Paper by Silver Oaks**  
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**January 2013**

---

**A few tangible practices which helped in Leadership development**

**VISION:**

Silver Oaks was born in the year 2002 and as the school started growing and transforming itself from a State board school to a CBSE school and a PYP school and also achieving many milestones we felt the need of a vision and mission statement for the school to progress with a foresight.

Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.

--Joel Barker

The “Vision” sets out the “ideal state that the institution aspires to reach” and it serves as a clear path for the present and future courses of actions.

Also to have a vision and work towards it is the ultimate goal of any individual. All the teachers, pedagogical leadership team including the Director of the School spent a weekend in the school discussing and debating on their aspirations for the young people in the school.

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January 2013

---

A few key aspirations evolved out of the brain storming session. “achieve, aspire, ambition, purpose, lead, help, clarity, determination, goals, role model....etc.,”

Compiling them together was like a jigsaw puzzle because words need to be tied in together to convey the clarity.

Dr Stephen Covey’s book ‘7Habits of Highly Effective People’ is extensively used in the school (The Principal considers it as her personal compass). These lines from the book appeared to be putting our jigsaw puzzle together.

**Live for a purpose**

**Learn to apply**

**Lead with determination**

**and**

**Leave a timeless legacy**

**We added – Vision is to groom young people who will**

**Live for a purpose**

**Learn to apply**

**Lead with determination**

**and**

**Leave a timeless legacy**

**A Research Paper by Silver Oaks**  
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**January 2013**

---

As we read and reread the lines, we felt that nothing could be more perfect than these aspirations. We mulled over these lines for more than a fortnight and finally drafted it as our Vision statement.

We printed it in our school almanac, manual, journals and displayed in the school. Discussions in the assembly helped in students getting on board with us.

The words - Live Learn Lead and Leave – assumed a great purpose since then.

**Dr STEPHEN COVEY'S 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE:**

Highly inspired by Dr Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People the school has successfully engrained these habits in the minds of the students.

When the acorns graduate from Junior school they are in harmony with themselves through the attributes, attitudes and skills, we believe that they are ready for effectiveness. We have integrated the 7Habits of Highly Effective People as propounded by Dr Stephen Covey to lay a path for their personal and public effectiveness.

- Be Proactive
- Begin with the end in mind
- Put First things first
- Seek first to understand and then to be understood
- Think win-win
- Synergize
- Sharpen your saw

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---

This inspiration has turned the students into responsible and proactive citizens. The 7 habits as quoted by the author have been deeply established in the actions of the students belonging to the senior school.

This is evident from the fact that students have taken many initiatives and received many accolades from their parents and guests in the school.

And thus the senior block has been renamed as the 'Leadership Block' as a token of the school's appreciation to the school's young leaders.

Opportunities are created in the school assemblies for the students to share their experiences of inculcating the 7 habits and how it is helping them be more organized and confident. Imbibing the 7 habits in our daily life enhances the leadership skills thus helping the young learners groom into responsible citizens.

### **IB LEARNER PROFILE:**

When the school applied for IB PYP, primarily we saw the prospects of a learner profile in every child.

The IB learner profile provides a long-term vision of education. It is a set of ideals that can inspire, motivate and focus the work of schools and teachers, uniting them in a common purpose.

A Research Paper by Silver Oaks  
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January 2013

---

The learner profile describes a list of attributes that promote academic rigor and the establishing of a personal value system leading to international-mindedness.

| <b>Attributes</b>    | <b>Attitudes</b>      | <b>Skills</b>                 |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Balanced</b>      | <b>Appreciation</b>   | <b>Social skills</b>          |
| <b>Principled</b>    | <b>Respect</b>        | <b>Communication skills</b>   |
| <b>Knowledgeable</b> | <b>Integrity</b>      | <b>Self management Skills</b> |
| <b>Inquirer</b>      | <b>Creativity</b>     | <b>Thinking skills</b>        |
| <b>Risktaker</b>     | <b>Enthusiasm</b>     | <b>Research skills</b>        |
| <b>Caring</b>        | <b>Curiosity</b>      |                               |
| <b>Thinker</b>       | <b>Commitment</b>     |                               |
| <b>Communicator</b>  | <b>Responsibility</b> |                               |
| <b>Reflective</b>    | <b>Tolerance</b>      |                               |
| <b>Open minded</b>   | <b>Independence</b>   |                               |
|                      | <b>Cooperation</b>    |                               |
|                      | <b>Confidence</b>     |                               |
|                      | <b>Empathy</b>        |                               |

**A Research Paper by Silver Oaks**  
**on**  
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**January 2013**

---

If all the ten attributes and twelve attitudes of the learner profile are interpreted and contextualized, the young people will be inclined to lead themselves.

The school used all contexts and situations to interpret and discuss these elements of a learner profile.

They gradually turned into integral part of a learner's identity.

Leadership is about leading oneself! Learner profile began to help in grooming leaders.

### **STUDENT GOVERNMENT:**

India has the largest democracy in the world. As a school we believe that our students need to understand the ideals of democracy right from their schooling age. To make the students understand about democracy and to visualise it we have the student government in the school.

Every year in April when the new session begins we conduct the elections for the student government. Prior to the elections the interested students submit their nominations to the electoral board of the school that consists of the Chief Election Commissioner and two officer incharges. The nominations are scrutinized and the final nominees are declared to contest in the elections.



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---

The nominees select their election symbols and canvas too! Speeches, canvassing, ballot box, voting age, mark on the index finger, counting of the votes, declaring the results and the swearing in ceremony are all a part of the electoral system in the school.

The electoral system in the school enables the students to understand the election process in our country. Every year the students are very eager to participate in the elections and feel the experience of democracy at a very age.

The student government elections in the school provide a platform for the students to enhance their communication skills, social skills, organizational skills, managerial skills, and above all the leadership skills.

By acquiring the leadership skills there is a change in the personality and approach of the students. They become more confident and accountable for their actions.

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on  
**Leadership Development**  
January 2013

---

**LEADER IN ME:**

Typically, leadership appears to be the forte of a few people and it is also identified with leading a country or a revolution.

That leadership is a responsibility that can be assumed by anybody and any cause is big enough to be taken up is the concept we wanted to drive into the minds of our acorns.

To make them observe the same, we began to invite citations from parents of our students.

[Pls click here to view the invitation for citations](#)

Out of 2000 students, parents of 500 students sent their citations.

We made groups of students with one teacher in each group. Each group was given 25 letters. We asked them to develop a criteria for understanding them and evaluating the 'responsibility' and the 'cause' and ofcourse the 'effect'.

It took 3 days of intense discussions and debated amongst them to arrive at a number of 25 parents who deserve to be awarded by the school as 'leaders'

A Research Paper by Silver Oaks  
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**Leadership Development**  
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---

The school invited them to hoist the national flag on 15th August.

25 strands of one rope hoisted the Indian national flag on 15th August 2009.



We repeated the leader in me program in 2010. By then students developed a conceptual understanding of leadership and it's effects.

We could not have designed a better model than evaluating case studies of leadership in parents.

Leadership as a concept was omnipresent.



**A Research Paper by Silver Oaks**  
on  
**Leadership Development**  
January 2013

---

### **Inside out approach**

Leaders do not command excellence, they build excellence. Excellence is “being all you can be” within the bounds of doing what is right for your organization. To reach excellence you must first be a leader of good character.

And that’s evident in the school’s DNA – Inside-Out Approach to be a leadership school with character first and competence next.

Excellence starts with leaders of good and strong character who engage in the entire process of leadership.

### **A DAY WITH A LEADER:**

Leadership in famous people like Gandhi Nehru and Patel, leadership in parents, leadership in students who contest school elections, leadership in everyday life- school worked on highlighting it in as many ways as it can.

We designed a new program called ‘A Day with a Leader’ where the student identifies a person who he/she thinks is a leader and spends one working day with him/her. Objective was to observe the leader in action and note down the leadership traits.

This initiative was introduced only to Grade X students.

Since 2009, X graders have been seeking appointments, spending time with leaders in their work domains, observing and making notes and returning to school with their presentations.

[Pls click here to view the letter](#)

A Research Paper by Silver Oaks  
on  
**Leadership Development**  
January 2013

---

**LEADERSHIP SONG:**

To inspire and motivate the students for enhancing their leadership skills, we have an inspirational song. The song makes you feel elated and leaves you with a sense of feeling that you can do anything and you can be your leader.

A poem was found in one of the web resources by Ms. Rachna Sharma which was perfect for and tune was set by Mr. John. The author was unknown.

**THE LEADER in YOU says**

*I am only one but I am one  
I cannot do everything but I can do something  
And what I can do I ought to do  
And what I ought to do I do  
I do more than belong I participate  
I do more than care I help  
I do more than believe I practice  
I do more than be fair I am kind  
I do more than dream I work  
I do more than teach I inspire  
I do more than earn I enrich  
I do more than give I serve  
I do more than live I grow  
I do more than talk I act  
I am more than good I am good for a cause*

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---

## **Ramleela**

Leading oneself begins from recognizing strengths and weaknesses. After the recognition, working on improving the strengths to reduce the weaknesses is essential.

Based on this premise, school reinvented a traditional practice of India into a 'Good Habits Festival'.

Every year Dussehra is celebrated during October to mark the victory of Legendary King Rama over the evil Ravan. Symbolically, Ravan's effigy is burnt as the end of evil.

School reinvented it as festival of good habits. Students are asked to list down their bad habits and good habits for a fortnight prior to that.

By inviting them to list their bad habits, we helped them accept many of their traits which are not helping them in anyway.

We also reassured them that it's okay to have bad habits, but its not okay to live with them-once we know they are bad'

From nail biting to watching TV to laziness to spending long hours in toilet- many bad habits began to be listed by them.



A Research Paper by Silver Oaks  
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---

On the day of Ramleela- along with the evil effigy, bad habits are also burnt.

Last 6 years this practice helped many acorns burn their bad habits and work on their strengths. In 2012, parents were also invited to burn their bad habits along with their children. Many parents spent considerable time discussing their bad habits with children and finally burning them with mutual agreements on shedding them forever.



A Research Paper by Silver Oaks  
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---

## MANTRAS OF MAHATMA

The relevance of Gandhism in 21st century is highly debated. The school always found a way to interpret and contextualize theories, traditions and philosophies to provoke the students.

5 principles of Gandhiji were identified as Mantras of Mahatma-

**Swaraj** - Self control and self-discipline

**Satyagraha** - Truth and Non violence

**Sarvodaya** - Universal welfare

**Swadesh** - Self sufficiency

**Swadharma** - Congruence in thoughts and actions

In 2010, school began to discuss and brainstorm on how these mantras can help the learners. Congruence between learner profile and mantras were discovered and peer group observations were encouraged. Once the value of these mantras was understood by students, the school presented a mega event 'Mantras of Mahatma' through the students as a message to adults on how one can gain by following the mantras.

[Pls click here to view resolution card](#)





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---

## **TRAINING CHILDREN FROM DISTURBED BACKGROUNDS**

The School supports Prajwala, a NGO which works for women in distress. By training the teachers in content development and curriculum management, silver oaks has assumed responsibility to render all possible help to Prajwala schools. When the Coordinator of Prajwala schools, Mr Chandra requested for training their students with leadership qualities, we took the opportunity to enhance the leadership skills in our students.

Members of the student government planned and implemented the training sessions. Two sessions have been conducted till date and the feedback from prajwala is highly encouraging.

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