
Opening Address¹

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The Opening Address explores the ESP Project Leader Profiles for the professional development of ESP practitioners worldwide. The 51 profiles have been published primarily on the official blog of TESOL International Association and exceed 57,000 words in total. In each profile, the featured ESP project leader defines leadership and describes leadership communication in a successful ESP project. The profiles may provide insights into negotiating a definition of program quality and how to achieve it. This paper is adapted from Knight (2019).

The ESP Project Leader Profiles

The ESP Project Leader Profiles were created for the professional development of ESP practitioners and researchers worldwide. Fifty profiles were published on the blog of TESOL International Association from May 2015 to December 2018. The 51st profile appeared in the March 2019 issue of ESP News (the newsletter of the TESOL ESP Interest Section), and the 52nd profile is in press. The 51 profiles published to date exceed 57,000 words in total, and the projects discussed are on six continents.

A profile features an ESP project leader and contains the following components:

1. My introduction
2. Bio of the featured leader
3. Photo, affiliation, contact information
4. The leader's responses to two prompts:
 - "Define leadership in your own words."
 - "Tell me an ESP project success story. Focus on your communication as a leader in the project. How did you communicate with stakeholders to make that project successful?"

5. My comments

The two prompts in the profiles were adapted from Knight's (2015) semi-structured interviews with self-identified leaders in the public, private, and academic sectors. The length of a profile in the TESOL Blog was eventually limited by TESOL International Association to 1,200 words. The profiles in ESP News also maintain a self-imposed limit of 1,200 words for consistency.

TESOL ESP Interest Section (ESPIS) Steering Board members including chairs (past and present) account for 17 of the first 20 leaders, and for 25 of the 51 leaders. There are an equal number of male and female leaders in first 20 profiles, and the gender balance is maintained as 27 of the 51 leaders are female.

The countries listed in the profiles span the globe from Japan to Brazil, and the wide range of projects fall under many headings, including aviation maintenance, healthcare, and materials for mobile phones.

Communication in the Profiles

Two definitions of leadership have contributed to a framework that can be used to analyze the profiles: "Leadership [is] a communication process consisting of two parts: 1) communicating to create a vision and 2) communicating to achieve a vision" (Knight, 2013), and "Leadership is making real a vision in collaboration with others" (Knight & Candlin, 2015, p. 36). The framework has three parts:

1. The vision to be created
 - an ESP program, book, research article, government policy
2. Communication to create the vision
 - obtaining stakeholder input in creating an ESP program, e.g., needs analysis
3. Communication to achieve the vision
 - persuading stakeholders to support an ESP program that has been created
 - conducting activities in the ESP program
 - ongoing communication with stakeholders, e.g., student feedback and progress reports

The framework clarifies the communication of the leaders in the profiles.

As an example, consider extracts from two profiles² where the communication is to create a vision:

English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) program (Profile 1)

- Listened to perspectives of all stakeholders using a variety of methods (focus groups, surveys, 1:1 meetings).
- Clearly articulated the vision, process, and framework to key stakeholders using visuals as well as written and oral communication methods.

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program (Profile 7)

- The stakeholders did not know that ESP was what they wanted, but because I had ESP analysis skills, I was able to help them define and envision a program that prepared the learners specifically for the communication tasks they would have to do.
- Having opened Pandora's box of dreams, I then had to help the stakeholders focus in on what their most important goals were for the program and to define what was achievable in the time available.

The implication for program quality is the importance of a focus on communication because stakeholders negotiate the definition of quality and how the quality agreed upon is achieved. The 51 profiles also show that ongoing communication with stakeholders at all stages of program development and implementation is important for program success.

Notes

1. The 51 ESP Project Leader Profiles analyzed in this paper are accessible on the blog of TESOL International Association (<http://blog.tesol.org>). They are also listed with publication dates and links in the Library of the TESOL ESP Interest Section (ESPIS) in myTESOL (<https://my.tesol.org/home>). (Please note that only TESOL members may access the ESPIS Library.) In addition, the profiles may be accessed in the more recent issues of *ESP News* (<https://www.tesol.org/read-and-publish/newsletters-other-publications/interest-section-newsletters/esp-news>), which is the newsletter of the ESPIS, and at the author's website titled The Leadership Connection Project (<https://leadershipconnectionproject.wordpress.com/2016/01/06/esp->

project-leader-profiles/).

2. See the ESP Project Leader Profiles in the blog mentioned above, which include: Profile 1. Kristin Ekkens, and Profile 7. Ethel Swartley.

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