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SLC 101 Self-Assessment 1

 It is possible to be a great leader regardless of whatever position a person holds or where they are at in life. My understanding of relational leadership is that it is someone who encourages, inspires, and takes charge respectfully of those around them no matter if they have an authoritative title or not. Relational leaders use their own lives to speak to the people around them to have a positive influence on their lives. It means to set the right example all the time so that the group that they are in will follow in their footsteps, which continues the cycle of producing great leaders. It also means doing the right thing and honoring what you believe regardless of who is watching you or the group you are with. If you call yourself a leader and people look up to you, then if you set the wrong example the people under you will think it is acceptable to do the same thing. Relational leaders are constantly learning and do not act like they already know everything but are always growing and expanding their knowledge. They stand up for what they believe in and what they think, while at the same time being open to others’ opinions and incorporating the whole group. One of the main qualities of a relational leader is being able to get personal with different types of people, creating relationships with them, and just naturally having the ability to be successful at leading those around them. Successful leaders also help their group to be more independent and to be able to work without the leader always being there. Something that I have learned that is extremely important for being a good leader is genuinely caring about the people that are under you, putting them first, and always taking care of your own people. Your group will also like and respect you so much more if you put their needs first and continue to look out for them. True leaders should never put themselves before the group but put the goals and concerns of those under them first.

 The five main components of real relational leadership are purpose, ethics, empowering, inclusive, and process oriented. Purpose is having meaning, seeing a goal and chasing after it no matter the obstacles that stand in your way. Leaders that have purpose have great vision and induce change in whatever environment that they are placed in. Relational leaders are ethical, which means strong core values, they are real with everyone, and are very trustworthy. They are respectable people and have honorable character. Empowering is an extremely important trait that means to encourage those around you, lifting others up, and using what everyone has to offer in the most reasonable way. Inclusiveness is a component of relational leadership which can be defined as someone that is not narrow minded, who listens to everybody, and who is not bothered by difference in opinions, but believes everyone is valid. Process-oriented is one of the most crucial qualities of a relational leader. Process-oriented leaders are great at collaborating with a group, they are good at distributing information and receiving back feedback, which they use and learn from. For me personally out of these five components of a relational leader, I am most confident in ethics and empowering. I chose ethics because I believe that I have really strong values that I stand up for, I always try to set the best example that I can, and I am a very trustworthy person. I also care about others and try to be fair to everyone, so that everybody has a mutual respect and understanding of one another. I am confident in empowering, because I am always a happy and joyful person and I try to spread it to others. I do not believe in putting anyone down, I believe everyone is equal and has something to contribute. I am probably least confident in process-oriented out of the five traits of a relational leader. I chose process-oriented because I am not the best at the relational part of leadership and interacting with large groups of people. I am also not the to great at giving feedback on certain things, I am good at receiving information, but I need to improve on giving it to others. I would like to work on this trait over my years at NC State and become a better leader.