**TITLE OF YOUR DISSERTAION:**

**A CHANGE LEADERSHIP PROJECT**

Your Name

Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

Submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements of

Doctor of Education

in the Foster G. McGaw Graduate School

National College of Education

National Louis University

December, 2014

**DISSERTATION**

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Submitted for Approval

Month, Year

Approved:

This form is currently being revised. Oct. 2013

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Chair, Dissertation Committee Program Director

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Dean’s Representative

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Date Approved

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This document was created as *one* part of the three-part dissertation requirement of the National Louis University (NLU) Educational Leadership (EDL) Doctoral Program. The National Louis Educational Leadership EdD is a professional practice degree program (Shulman et al., 2006).

For the dissertation requirement, doctoral candidates are required to plan, research, and implement three major projects, one each year, within their school or district with a focus on professional practice. The three projects are:

* Program Evaluation
* Change Leadership Plan
* Policy Advocacy Document

For the **Program Evaluation** candidates are required to identify and evaluate a program or practice within their school or district. The “program” can be a current initiative; a grant project; a common practice; or a movement. Focused on utilization, the evaluation can be formative, summative, or developmental (Patton, 2008). The candidate must demonstrate how the evaluation directly relates to student learning.

In the **Change Leadership Plan** candidates develop a plan that considers organizational possibilities for renewal. The plan for organizational change may be at the building or district level. It must be related to an area in need of improvement, and have a clear target in mind. The candidate must be able to identify noticeable and feasible differences that should exist as a result of the change plan (Wagner et al., 2006).

In the **Policy Advocacy Document** candidates develop and advocate for a policy at the local, state or national level using reflective practice and research as a means for supporting and promoting reforms in education. Policy advocacy dissertations use critical theory to address moral and ethical issues of policy formation and administrative decision making (i.e., what ought to be). The purpose is to develop reflective, humane and social critics, moral leaders, and competent professionals, guided by a critical practical rational model (Browder, 1995).

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Wagner, T., et al. (2006). *Change leadership: A practical guide to transforming our schools.* San

Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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**ABSTRACT**

An abstract, which is no more than **120 words**, should clearly summarize the problem, method, results, and conclusions. You should not include any other information such as the title of your project, or your name. The Abstract page should be numbered in lower-case roman numerals in bottom center. The Candidate writes this after completing the study.

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**PREFACE**

The candidate writes a 1 – 2 page Preface for *each* of the 3 projects to be inserted immediately following the each of the 3 title pages. The purpose is to provide the reader with (1) background and context, her/his position in the school or district, the role she played in initiating and advancing the project, and why this project was important to her and other stakeholders ; (2) significant leadership lessons learned by the candidate as a result of having planned and completed the project; and (3) how the experience has influenced her/his preparation and/or growth in leadership. The Candidate writes this after completing the study.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OPTIONAL: The Candidate writes this after completing the study.

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# DEDICATION

OPTIONAL: The Candidate writes this after completing the study.

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**SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION**

Using Wagner et. al. (2006) *Change Leadership: A Practical Guide for Transforming Our Schools*, the thesis writer will develop a plan that considers organizational possibilities for renewal and uncover leadership strategies for personal transformation. The thesis writer will propose a plan for organizational change at his or her building, or at the district level. The plan must be related to a clear area in need of improvement. The plan must have a clear target in mind; in other words, the writer must be able to identify the noticeable (and feasible) differences that should exist as a result of the change process.

Using Wagner et. al. (2006) 4 C’s change model for organizational renewal, the thesis writer will identify an area in need of improvement in their organization (the “AS IS”). He or she will then begin to envision a plan for organizational change (the “to be”) that starts with identifying factors that appear to be impacting, or are reflective of, the problem area in need of improvement.

Known as the AS IS/TO BE diagnosis-to-visioning change process, the four organizational areas to be examined for possibilities for change and renewal are context, culture, conditions, and competencies.

**Statement of The Problem**

Describe the problem that calls for change, and what you envision the consequences will be of successfully initiating the change.

Start each of the five major Sections at the **top of a new page.**

In assembling and writing your program evaluation, include the following Sections, and Sub-sections, ***in the order they are listed.***

**Rationale**

State your reasons for selecting this problem as the focus of your change plan. Include your own personal connection to the plan. Explain why it is important to you, to your school or district, and the educational community at large.

**Goals**

State the intended goals of the change plan and how they will address the problem situation in need of change.

**Demographics**

Provide a description of the demographics of your school or district. Include basic information such as student population, SES, racial and ethnic make-up, and achievement data.

**Conclusion**

Include a conclusion here.

**SECTION TWO: ASSESSING THE 4 C’S (AS IS)**

The "as is" section focuses on the current contexts, competencies, culture, and conditions that exist in the organization. To explore the "as is," the thesis writer will conduct organizational research via observation, focus group, interview, document analysis, and survey. At the same time, the writer will explore personal biases, competencies, leadership styles, and leadership journeys. This dual focus - of organizational and individual change - allows the writer to better understand his or her organization, and how he or she can be a more effective leader within the organization.

Using the AS-IS Diagnostic tool you created in Term Five, list and elaborate on the factors you identified in *each* of the four arenas of change (context, culture, conditions, and competencies) that are in need of change. To assist you in thinking about what to include in each of the four arenas, refer to “Arenas of Change” p. 98 – 109, in Chapter Six of *Change Leadership*. [From the Term 5 paper: Having identified factors in each of the 4 areas (context, culture, conditions, and competencies) that are in need of change, the thesis writer will create and attach an electronic version of the 4C’s “as is” diagnostic chart in the Appendices.]

**Context**

External to an organization are the cultural, political, economic, and--in the field of education--educational factors that provide influence. They are the elements that often seem beyond our control but deeply impact the work of the organization.

**Culture**

As Bolman & Deal (1997) describe organizational culture, it is the "way things get done around here." In other words, while an organizational chart might demonstrate how things "should" get done, culture is the reality: it is the patterns, shared assumptions, and interpretations that shape behavior within an organization.

**Conditions**

Internal to the organization are structural, cultural, economic, and symbolic factors that often constrain but sometimes also support organizational change. Compared to culture, the conditions are the more tangible elements that shape how we make sense of the surface-level health of the organization. Included are financial issues, departmental configurations, leadership and human resource issues, and so forth.

**Competencies**

Because people--not organizations--carry out change, people within the organization should be equipped with various technical, social, and leadership skills and knowledge. Often, in their absence, even the best designed plans fail. Competencies can be seen both as "hard" and "soft"--hard competencies might be the actual skills and knowledge required carrying out specific tasks; soft competencies might be the dispositions, personal affects, leadership styles, and communication styles of individual people. 

**Conclusion**

Include a conclusion here.

**SECTION THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Having identified what you see to be the major factors in each of the four C’s that appear to be contributing to the problem, identify the kinds of data (qualitative and quantitative) you will need to gather and analyze for an accurate, or more in-depth, understanding of the existing (AS-IS) context, culture, conditions, and competencies. See Chapter Eight of *Change Leadership* to help you think about the kinds of data that change leaders need to gather and analyze before making plans for strategic action. For example, consider what data might help you better understand the situation or problem. Also consider what data might help you to convey the urgency of the need for a change to stakeholders. Data might include interview, observation, survey, focus group, document analysis (formative or summative assessments), or other types of data.

**Research Design**

Give an overview of the kinds of data you intend to collect for your change plan, and explain why you believe this data will help you (1) gain an accurate, or more in depth, understanding of the AS-IS and (2) convey the urgency of the need for the organizational change you are proposing.

**Participants**

Who are the key participants from whom you will be gathering data? How and why were they chosen?

**Data Collection Techniques**

For each of the sources you intend to collect data (interview, survey, focus group, observation, test scores, etc.), explain in detail how you plan to gather each type of data.

You will probably need to use subheadings in this section. Let’s say you are going to use interviews, surveys, and observations under the Data Gathering Techniques Sub-section of the methodology section. You would sub-head each one bold and flush left as:

**Surveys**

**Interviews**

**Observations**

**Ethical Considerations**

Discuss the ethical issues involved in your data collection and change leadership plan.

**Conclusion**

Include a conclusion here.

**SECTION FOUR: RELEVANT LITERATURE**

**Introducti**on

Present and discuss literature relevant to the issues at stake regarding the goal of your organizational change plan. This could be about the topic, or subject, of your plan (teacher evaluation, coaching, raising teacher expectations for students, etc.) or best practices in organizational theory, professional development, leadership strategies, or communication strategies that you believe will help you to achieve your organizational change goal. In order to Meet Expectations, the minimum number of sources referenced and discussed in this section is 15 sources.

You will probably need to use subheadings in this section.Here is an example of one sub-heading you might need, such as:

**Definition of Terms**

**Various Headings Regarding Your Topic**

**Conclusion**

Include a conclusion here.

**SECTION FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION**

**Findings**

Here the thesis writer presents and interprets relevant data drawn from both quantitative and qualitative sources that will help guide the successful implementation of the change plan. In this section you will report the results of all the data-gathering techniques you used in your study. You will want to use tables or graphs to present the summaries of the various types of data – after you have given a written description of the data. You would sub-head each one flush left:

**Surveys**

**Interviews**

**Observations**

**Interpretation**

What do the results mean? What is the significance of the findings? Why did they turn out this way? What are some explanations? Interpretation goes beyond *the data* to add context, determine meaning, and tease out substantive significance. (Patton, 2008, p.478)

**SECTION SIX: A VISION OF SUCCESS (TO BE)**

The "to be" portion of the project envisions and articulates the micro-level arenas within the organization that would need to be changed in order for the change target to be met. Again, the thesis writer will look at the contexts, competencies, culture, and conditions; but this time, the writer theorizes possibilities those four arenas (known in the Wagner change leadership framework as “the four C’s”) that would lead to organizational renewal.

What would the future contexts, conditions, competencies, and culture look like if your organizational change plan were realized? If your goal is achieved, what new features of the organization would also be realized? Describe your vision of the “TO-BE”. [From the Term 5 paper: For the “to be” visioning part of the process, the thesis writer will also create and attach an electronic version of the 4 C’s “TO-BE ” organizational chart that depicts a vision of the future where the problem has been resolved. This may have evolved from the Term 5 “TO-BE” vision, as a result of participating in this journey.]

**SECTION SEVEN: STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS FOR CHANGE**

In this section, the thesis writer bridges the "as is" and the "TO-BE" conceptualizations with a series of strategies and actions based upon research and best practice in organizational theory, professional development, leadership strategies, and communication strategies. In some detail, these strategies and actions should address in specific issues identified in each of the four arenas for change (context, culture, conditions, and competencies).

**Conclusion**

Include a conclusion here.

REFERENCES

Allison, B. & Schumacher, G. (2011). Learning research and community decision making. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, *14*(4) 10–21. doi: 10.1177/1555458911432019

APPENDIX A

As-Is Chart

APPENDIX B

To-Be Chart

APPENDIX C

Strategies and Actions Chart