



Customer Service Notes for *Demonstrating Leadership Skills at Every Level*

Definitions of leadership often include phrases such as:

- “Creating a Positive Change”
- “Influencing Others”
- “Helping Others Realize their Potential”
- “Motivating Others to Accomplish Goals”
- “Problem Solving” and
- “Making a Difference”

You don’t need to be in a formal leadership role such as that of WIC Director to demonstrate leadership skills. In fact, everyone in a WIC office can be a leader.

As the first person who sees WIC participants, a Receptionist can show leadership. For instance, suppose a mistake has been made and you have participants who show up at the same time who have been double-booked to see a Nutritionist. By providing options to resolve the problem, you are being a leader.

WIC staff who provide nutritional counseling to participants can also be leaders. By motivating a participant to change the diet of her child to include more fruits and vegetables instead of junk food, a nutritionist is being a leader. A nutritionist may also need to provide constructive feedback to a participant who is not following the advice given. Although a number of people do not look forward to having to give this negative feedback, this is also part of being a leader

Of course, those who are in a supervisory capacity such as a WIC Director are leaders every day. From coaching staff and communicating effectively with all staff, he or she is a leader. A WIC Director should also be a role model for staff and exhibit traits such as integrity and professionalism in the workplace.

Remember, too, that you can also be a leader by taking ownership of challenges that arise in the office - whether they relate to systems, paperwork or being short-staffed. Your co-workers will appreciate your willingness to jump in and be a leader!

Questions for Reflection:

1. How can you be a leader when working with participants?
2. What can you do to be a leader with your co-workers?
3. What traits do you admire from those who exhibit good leadership skills? Can you apply those in your role with WIC?

