

YLDP Houston Students Learn about Defining Strategic Leadership



By PRISHA MENON

HOUSTON: When we think about the process of growing a plant, we gravitate immediately towards the factors that are necessary to help the plant prosper in its selective environment. Though certain areas can only provide specific resources, through natural selection, only a few are able to survive. Like these plants, we humans require certain characteristics to grow in our journey towards becoming our best selves, despite the environments we are placed in. Therefore, in a group environment, those that exhibit determination through strategic thinking are the ones that can rise above the rest and ultimately work more effectively.

Strategic thinking- the art of considering multiple perspectives while also embracing a growth

mindset. A question that many people tend to ask is the differentiation between what makes a strategic thinker successful from others. To answer this, we can visualize a staircase. Through this staircase, we find many different paths that lead us to a certain destination: one may have obstacles, while another may take a much longer path. As Mrs. Soumya Seetharam stated in her talk with us in YLDP (Youth Leadership Development Program) of Houston, "this staircase can go in lateral directions", but the strategic thinker is able to take the most efficient path through their ability to seek discomfort and create shared visions.

The act of seeking discomfort is an essential part of strategic culture which allows a team to prosper. Looking back into ancient Greek art, we see a consistency of idealized figures that draw people

to the conception that everything was perfect in their society. In contrast, the art piece by the name of The Seated Boxer from the Hellenistic Greek period showcases the naturalistic stance of a boxer who has been bruised. Through this representation of discomfort, we can understand that society is not just what we limit it to be: with this ability to step outside their comfort zone, an individual can bring in different perspectives because of integrating oneself into new experiences.

Communication is a vital aspect expressed in a strategic thinker. With a leader being able to create a shared vision for an entire team through their consistent communication, it keeps the team from polarizing and getting off track from the end destination. A strategic culture is one in which people are not reticent but assertive in their presentation of ideas, which allows them to learn from one another even in a competitive environment.

Uniqueness is a quality that we cannot disparage. Accordingly, a strategic thinker is one that can utilize these uniquenesses to grow with the tenacity for the team effort.

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