4-1994

The culmination of a major

Juli Finnell

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarship.richmond.edu/honors-theses

Recommended Citation
The Culmination of a Major

by

Juli Finnell

Senior Project
Jepson School of Leadership Studies
University of Richmond
Richmond, VA

April 1994
THE CULMINATION OF A MAJOR
Senior Project Report

Juli Finnell
April 25, 1994
THE CULMINATION OF A MAJOR

Juli Finnell
April, 25, 1994

THE PROBLEM

Throughout the course of the twentieth century, the United States has become a "throw-away" society. Comprising only 10% of the world's population, the United States currently produces an astonishing one third of the world's trash.

For too long, the issue of "waste management" in the United States has been seen in only one dimension: a matter of picking up trash and burying it into the ground. Already costing the United States more than $10 billion dollars a year, however, traditional methods of trash disposal are becoming increasingly expensive. In comparison, other industrial nations produce about half as much trash as the United States and recycle a major portion of it. Recycling saves money, energy, and natural resources as well as the quality of our air and water. Using recycled materials over again creates substantially less pollution than starting from scratch with raw materials. Recycling provides a safe alternative to landfills and municipal incinerators as primary methods for waste management and disposal.

Unfortunately, recycling has traditionally been defined as a "waste" issue rather than as a "purchasing" or "consumer" issue. In choosing specific actions to help reduce waste, consumers seem more receptive to those that call for some type of "post-purchase" involvement, such as recycling. However, they are not as enthusiastic about choices that call for a radical change in their shopping habits and consumer behavior. When consumers themselves have to pay, recycling quickly looses its appeal. As a result, consumers often have a negative attitude toward buying
Recycling efforts up until now have been generally successful. The United States has gone from being a complete “throw-away” society to one with recycling firmly implanted in its consciousness. Over the past decade, the amount of material collected for recycling has increased dramatically. Yet, we must remember that recycling is much more than just collection. There are three stages involved in completing the full recycling cycle, and collection is only the first. The second and third stages involve reproduction and resale. Overall, America has done well on the first two stages. The advancement of technology has greatly increased our ability to reclaim materials, many of which are used to make products of the same quality as those of virgin material (aluminum recycling, for example). The third stage of recycling involves the selling and buying of products made from recycled materials. Without markets, recycling centers simply become “above-ground” landfills and do not help solve the problem of waste.

We must take a more holistic approach to recycling--one that takes into account all three stages of recycling. This approach must be taken by all consumers: the American public, business and industry, and federal, state, and local governments.

THE CONCEPTION

Five months ago, a rather reserved, refined lady from the Richmond community visited the Jepson School of Leadership Studies. She came to talk with Dr. Gill Hickman’s “Leader as a Change Agent class,” of which I was a member. Her name was Betty Burne Ware and her topic was “Recycling as a Social Movement.” In the course of her speech, she discussed the successful examples of “buying recycled” in formal organizations and mentioned an organization called the Buy Recycled...
Business Alliance. This was the conception of my senior project.

At the time of her visit, I was involved in a group project that revolved around the recycling issue. Beyond this project, I have been interested and involved in the recycling movement for at least ten years, starting with developing a recycling program for my family. Because of my dedication to our environment and active participation in recycling, I found Mrs. Ware’s comments very interesting. I was most intrigued by what she said about the Buy Recycled Business Alliance (BRBA).

Mrs. Ware informed the class that the BRBA, begun by the National Recycling Coalition, is composed of 500 small and large organizations that focus on making a concerted effort to increase their recycled content purchases. This group of organizations has spent $10.5 billion on recycled products over the past year, an increase from $2.7 billion the year before. The BRBA provides practical information, workshops, and resources so that individuals and other businesses can evaluate and expand their purchases of recycled materials and products with recycled content. Connie Cloak, a member of the BRBA and Environmental Affairs Coordinator for Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores, Inc. states that “every company, no matter what its size, can make a difference in the market for recycled materials if it buys more recycled products.”

Members of the BRBA include Walmart, American Airlines, Rubbermaid, McDonald’s Corporation, Lever Brothers Company, the James River Corporation, and Emory University, just to name a few. Through this alliance, as well as through working with other groups and individuals, these organizations are setting an example and have been extremely influential in gaining a much needed
commitment from other sectors of society.

These organizations realize what a good decision joining such a movement can be. "At a time when consumer demand and environmental accountability are on the rise," deciding to close the loop could definitely be a good public relations maneuver as well as a good environmental maneuver. In the end, as a greater demand for recycled products and materials presents itself, "more competitively priced recycled products will be produced and . . . [the] creating [of] markets for the [materials] collected will result." We can all "be proud to know that every time [we] buy recycled . . . products, [we] demonstrate [our] commitment to the environment, save landfill space, and set an example for others . . . to buy recycled as well" (Office Paper Recycling Guide, 1991). These were words that I wanted the University of Richmond to be able to say.

THE PURPOSE

I had three broad goals in mind when I began to develop my senior project. First, I wanted to enact some kind of change in my community. I wanted to make the place where I live a better place for those who will come after me. My thoughts were, "What better way to have a project I can truly care about and emotionally invest in than to work directly with the immediate community in which I have spent the last four years?" Secondly, I wanted to be involved with an issue in which I had a strong interest. After our class period with Mrs. Ware, I knew that my issue would have to be the environment. My interest in this area stems from a deep concern for our environment, and the future of our society, and, ultimately, the future of our race. My third goal was to do something active. I knew from the start that I did not want to spend my time in the library or in front of a computer screen. I wanted to "get out there" and get my hands dirty.
The Chronicle Begins

After four months of highs and lows, celebrations and disappointments, I have a story to tell. From the telephone calls to the meetings to the writing of proposals, I have lost track of the time I devoted to making my vision a reality. In retrospect it does not seem like that much actual effort, but the thoughts running through my mind about it were continuous and ever-present. This project involved working with many different types of people from a broad spectrum of interest and expertise. The work took place mainly in one-on-one discussions within a much larger, much more formal arena. This is my story....

When I returned from Christmas break in January and began to seriously develop my project proposal, I met with Mrs. Ware at her home near campus. As we sat in her livingroom over tea, we developed what we thought would be a reasonable task to fulfill my requirements and to meet my goals. Our decision was that I would work to recruit the University of Richmond to join the Buy Recycled Business Alliance. Once I reached this goal, I planned to launch a state-wide effort to recruit other independent colleges in Virginia to join as well. I know now this was easier said than done.

At this point, I gave much thought to the possible impacts that this project could have on people and issues beyond my own personal interests. For the environmental movement, it would add strength by adding numbers. The University of Richmond would be added to the list of organizations that support the process of “closing the loop” and that provide a market for products with recycled materials. It would get recyclables back into the marketplace and away from the
landfills. For the University, it would give them five major benefits. These benefits are listed in the National Recycling Coalition packet titled "What is the Buy Recycled Business Alliance." Those benefits are: (1) "technical assistance and information" about how to develop recycling and purchasing programs, (2) "peer counseling on any aspect of buying recycled," (3) information on how to expand recycled purchasing programs, (4) assistance at seminars, and (5) "access to an extensive information network on recycled products." A final benefit that the University would glean from its involvement with the BRBA was publicity.

The Buy Recycled Business Alliance has reached a broad, general audience, nationally and internationally. . . . Over 1,000 newspapers have carried stories about the Alliance, reaching over 180 million readers. Television coverage has included all major U.S. networks—CBS, NBC, ABC, and CNN—while radio coverage has included stations in top markets throughout the U.S. (NRC Packet)

Such national publicity would aid the University in its quest to become a more well known school and to attract students who may consider such a strong stance for the environment in their decision of which college to attend.

With these thoughts in mind, I departed from my meeting with Mrs. Ware overflowing with an abundance of enthusiasm and began my work immediately. My first telephone call was to Mrs. Betsy Andress in the University Purchasing Department. (As a side note, she happens to be Justin Andress's mother!). This is where my problems began. Although I called her in January, it was not until February 15, 1994 that we were able to meet for the first time. Conflicting schedules kept us from meeting beforehand.

In the intervening week and a half, between our initial telephone conversation and our meeting, I was not inactive. I telephones a Mr. Phil Bailey who works at the
Survey Business Form"). Directly related to this requirement was Mrs. Andress’s concern that computing those amounts for 1992 and 1993 would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for her, or anyone, to do. She was also concerned that the University would have difficulty reporting this information to the Alliance on a continued annual basis.

The reasons that she felt these deep concerns boiled down to two major areas. First, the University operates within a fragmented purchasing system. This means that there is no one specific department on campus that has the full responsibility for purchasing everything for use on the campus. The major purchasing offices are found in the Bookstore, the Print Shop, Physical Plant, Food and Auxiliary Services, and University Purchasing. This fragmentation prevents a centralized data bank that would facilitate the gathering of past information and continued analysis of purchasing practices.

The second area of concern revolved around current purchasing practices within the fragmented system. Preventing a centralized data bank is the fact that of the five main purchasing departments, only two of them work within the same computer program. Furthermore, zero of the five currently, or in the past, have made any type of delineation in their records concerning their purchases of recycled products. This brings me to the second major area surrounding Mrs. Andress’s concerns: different computer systems that are not tied together in any way.

So, with the concern about whether or not the university could fulfill its obligations as a member of the BRBA shrouded by a fragmented purchasing system and no computer link between departments, the direction of my senior project took a sharp
and unexpected turn. It was unexpected in that I had initially assumed that I would have no obstacles to confront. I assumed that convincing the University of Richmond to become visibly active in an issue that it already supports would be simple. It was a sharp turn in that I would be wading into untested and foreign waters.

Mrs. Andress suggested that I turn my efforts to several avenues. First, she suggested that I speak with someone in each purchasing department. In Physical Plant, I spoke with Al Lane. In Food Services I spoke with Cathy Moran. I have, almost two months later, been unable to meet with Mike Barbie in the Print Shop. In University Purchasing Mrs. Andress would remain my contact. We decided jointly to not look into the Bookstore since it does not involve purchasing for the University itself.

Mrs. Andress’s specific suggestion was that I speak with each of these people and discuss two main points with them. The first was whether they were willing to help out on this project. The second was what their suggestions for proceeding with this project would be.

THE NEW DIRECTION

With the two people that I was able to meet with, each expressed a great deal of enthusiasm about and support for my project. They both agreed that the University and the environment would benefit from a union with the BRBA.

Both Mr. Lane and Mrs. Moran explained the different aspects of what their respective departments are currently purchasing in regard to recycled products. Both departments, as with University Purchasing, do already order many different
products with recycled content. An unusual example that Mr. Lane mentioned was plastic clipboards ordered, ignorant of their content, for use by Physical Plant.

After explaining current purchases, both attempted to explain current practices in regard to purchasing procedures. Physical Plant works with the same computer software package as University Purchasing, and, like them, do not delineate in any way between products that have recycled content. Mr. Lane offered a suggestion about how this could be done in the future. A code letter, such as “R” for “recycled,” could be added at the beginning of the commodity code for relevant products. Being unfamiliar with the system himself, he was not sure whether or not this would be possible. He went on to suggest that I speak with someone in the Academic Computing Department here on campus.

In the Food and Auxiliary Services office, Cathy Moran explained that recycled products are delineated somewhat. But, this delineation is not done in a manner that would allow for easy compilation of such data on an annual basis. She explained that she could, with a bit of extra time and effort derive a rough estimate of needed information. She asked that I develop a written proposal for her that she could then discuss with her boss, Mr. Ron Inlow, for approval.

Meanwhile, I had been in contact with both Mrs. Ware here in Richmond and with Mr. Bailey at the National Recycling Coalition in Washington. Both of them informed me that this problem of tracking expenditures on recycled products had been difficult for many of the current members of the BRBA. Neither of them had good suggestions for how to make the system work. Nevertheless, Mr. Bailey reassured me that the information requested is only an estimate and need not be
It was at this point in the semester that I felt an overwhelming amount of frustration over this project. Being what I term a "computer moron," I had no idea of how to track costs within any of the systems in use. Also, my inability to even toy with the program, due to my natural isolation from the University's purchasing departments, was frustrating. I did not even know what I was facing. I was also frustrated with the bureaucracy I had run up against. This is a monster that I never expected to find in a private institution like the University of Richmond. It seemed as if every person I spoke with had to have everything approved by someone else. Either there is no one person who is completely responsible for purchasing for the institution, or no one is "allowed" to make any decisions alone. Yet another point of frustration stemmed from the fact that I requested that Mr. Bailey send more packets of information for me to distribute to the people I was dealing with. Without written information about the BRBA it was difficult for them to help me. Attempting to explain the Alliance with no materials to distribute to people doubtlessly impeded my progress on all fronts.

Grappling with this multifaceted frustration, I moved on, or at least I tried to. I hoped to meet with Mrs. Moran again to discuss the proposal I drafted with her (See Appendix II). She was out of town on vacation for almost two weeks so I was unable to meet with her until April 11, 1994. Likewise, I attempted to contact Kathy Monday in the Academic Computing Department. She is the resident expert on the Banner Software System, the computer system used by both University Purchasing and Physical Plant. She too was unavailable for a week.
Finally, I met with Mrs. Moran again. We looked over my proposal together and she expressed concerns about it. Her major reservation again dealt with the time and effort involved in tracking the needed information. She lamented that the Food and Auxiliary Services department did not have the manpower to do the necessary work. Our meeting ended when she agreed to discuss the proposal with Mr. Inlow, her boss. This occurred on April 11. I did not hear from her again until April 20.

When, after a long wait, I met with Mrs. Monday, she invited Mr. Gerry Manikus, another Banner expert, to join us. After explaining my needs to them, they discussed the problem in computer lingo—a language that I do not understand. They both expressed confidence that a tracking system could be devised to accommodate the needs of the purchasing departments using this system. Yet, like others I had spoken with, they expressed concern over the time and effort that would be involved in developing a computer strategy. Not knowing exactly how such a tracking system could be incorporated, both agreed to work on the problem in the coming week. Within that week they would have an approximation of the hours of work required to implement the needed changes. Once this information was known, they would then have to take their findings to their Academic Policy Review Committee. This is a committee that determines whether extraneous projects such as this can be afforded the necessary time and attention by staff members. Again, it was two weeks before I heard from them again.

The same day that I met with Mrs. Monday and Mr. Manikus, I met with Mrs. Andress for the third time. She, like everyone else I spoke with expressed great concern for my project. She explained that it could doubtless be completed, but
probably not soon, and definitely not before my project/paper due date. This led her to be concerned about my grade for the class. I reassured her that I would continue to work on this project even after graduation if need be and that my deadline had been extended. This seemed to ease her mind and reassure her that she would not be left holding this project in the end.

**STALEMATE**

From the date of these meetings, April 11, until April 20, my hands were tied. I still could not get in touch with Mike Barbie due to our conflicting schedules. I was waiting for Mr. Bailey to send the copies of BRBA materials that I had requested. I was waiting to hear whether Mr. Inlow in Food Services agreed with my proposal. I was waiting to hear from Mrs. Monday in Academic Computing as to whether the computer system could be altered. Again, I encountered great frustration. I felt so dependent on other people for their assistance to move forward in this endeavor. During this lag time, I almost just gave up. My thoughts were: “I do not care anymore. No one cares. I quit!”

**MOVING ON AT LAST**

Fortunately, I did not do what I was thinking. Just in the nick of time, on April 20, I found a message on my answering machine from Mrs. Moran. She said, “Juli, I talked with Ron and everything looks fine.” Whew! Was I relieved! At least one sector of the University was ready to embark on tracking costs of products with recycled content. From here on it was like a chain reaction. The next day, I went to my mailbox and found that I had a package waiting for me in the Campus Post Office. I knew exactly what it was. I immediately jumped in my car like a bat out of hell and found that Mr. Bailey had finally sent BRBA materials. This was another huge load off of my mind. While in the vicinity of the Post Office, I stopped my Academic Computing to drop the materials off to Mrs. Monday. Luckily, she was in
her office and asked me to talk to her for a while.

We had a very long, very informative conversation. She explained several aspects of the computer problems with me and explained where she and Gerry were on their work. First she explained the significance of changing the computer system. Every time the system is customized to include something like what is needed, it adds a cost to the system. This is because at least once a year, and sometimes three or four times a year, the system must be re-released to accommodate such things as changes in the tax structure and laws. This is something like ongoing maintenance of the system. Each time a release is needed, each piece of customized work must be re-added. This takes time, usually when time is limited and the work must be completed quickly. She went on to explain where she and Mr. Manikus are on their work. Evidently, the ball had been handed mostly to him and he has taken off with it. He has been in touch with Mrs. Andress to try to use an existing component of the program to "flag" products for later tracking. Mrs. Monday expressed confidence that this would be the easiest, least expensive, least time consuming way to go. Again she was hesitant to specify a date on which this might be completed, but reiterated her support for the project in general.

And this is where the saga ends. It is now Friday, April 22 and I am doubtful that any landmark decisions will be made between now and Monday, April 25. Although the conclusion to this story is still a mystery, I have dedicated myself to making sure that it reaches an acceptable end. I am prepared to persevere until the University of Richmond has made a pledge to join the Buy Recycled Business Alliance and is able to uphold its duties as a member of that organization.
Despite my high hopes at the outset of this project, there has been minimal impact at this point in time. I do not hold any reservations about the fact that there will be an impact soon. The University WILL join the BRBA to benefit itself and the environment, and ultimately its society.

LOOKING TO THE PAST

Throughout the semester as I worked my way along this project, I would often think how past classes in the Jepson School were helping me and giving me knowledge to depend on. Many times I was skeptical that I had learned anything over the past two years that could help me at all. Many times I was angry and wished I had majored in something “useful” like accounting. Many times I thought I had wasted my time.

Then there are days like today when, in retrospect, I would never have done anything differently. I think about the classes I have taken and how much I have learned in each one. Sometimes I forget to take advantage of and apply what I know, but when I remember to use my knowledge, I am amazed by how relevant everything I have learned is. Tying together my experiences this semester with my past classroom experiences will occupy the remaining portion of this report. I will begin by laying a groundwork on which to build further discussion. The foundation will involve the context in which I worked. I will then discuss the relevance of each class I have taken, some I wish I had taken, and some that I would like to see made available to students.

THE FOUNDATION

The context in which most of my work was done is that of the formal organization. This project was my second major experience working in a formal organization. My first experience in this sector was my internship experience. Working at Sigma Phi
Epsilon Headquarters provided me with a wonderful experience on which I could lean. While there I learned "formal organization etiquette." This let me know who to approach first and how to make that approach within a formal setting. This factored into my decision to go to Betsy Andress first. She is a Purchasing Agent for University Purchasing. I thought that by going to someone with experience and a formal position I would be able to involve someone with influence immediately.

My internship experience also taught me the importance of "knowing your stuff" when making a proposal and of getting straight to the point. People in many formal organizations have a wide variety of priorities and different timelines. In order to be listened to and appreciated, it is important to respect the time of others. Taking this into account, my approach to Mrs. Andress was very professional. I had packets and brochures for her to examine. I had a full presentation about the "Senior Project" in general and my goals in particular. I had a specific list of questions to ask her and was prepared to answer any she had for me. It was a very fruitful meeting in that I gained her support and commitment to further action.

Along with my internship experience, my experiences in the "Leadership in Formal Organizations" class provided me with expectations of what my senior project would involve. Unfortunately, I did not consider what I learned in that class a year ago when I started this project. I did not consider the obstacles I could face in a large formal organization. The main obstacle I encountered in this project was a multi-layered organizational structure that seemed to produce unwieldy bureaucracy.

Every time I spoke with someone within the University about my project, it seemed as if they had to talk to someone else with more authority before they could really
help me. No one that I spoke with was “allowed” by the organization to make any major decisions. Similarly, I could not seem to find the people who are allowed to make decisions. I could not find any one person who is responsible for purchasing for the University and who could make the needed decisions. This was a very difficult thing for me to deal with. I have slightly conflicting and contradictory opinions about the issue of responsibility in formal organizations such as the University of Richmond. By dispersing responsibility, all organization members are given more of a stock in the future of the group. Yet, this dispersion can also result in no one accepting responsibility or the “hiding” of responsibility for anyone, like me, that needs to pinpoint it.

Perhaps the reason I was most frustrated by the bureaucracy I encountered was that I was not prepared for it. I embarked on my project under the assumption that the University of Richmond is a relatively progressive academic institution that would find any degree of bureaucracy inhibiting of freedom and smoothness of operation. I thought it would be an organization that placed people and vision above structure and process. Obviously, I was mistaken. I realize that my comments seem very discouraging and I do not intend to paint a horribly grim picture of the University’s structure. I could even be wrong in thinking that there is a great deal of bureaucracy. Having not seen an organizational chart and being unfamiliar with the organization from an administrative perspective, my perceptions could be biased. I would like to think that my position as an “outsider” pushing my way into an organization that did not request my presence shadowed my potential effectiveness in the completion of this project. I believe that it could have been better initiated and carried out by someone who is already a member of the organizational structure.
Getting back to courses that aided my understanding of my context, I will focus on one in particular. The “Leadership in Formal Organizations” class devoted a section to analyzing “how effective leadership can impact the organization and shape the development of its vision, mission, goals and climate and culture” (“Formal Organizations” Syllabus). From these discussions, I learned that leaders, as a consequence of their position in the organization have the power to transform the direction in which that organization is headed. This includes the organization’s cares and concerns, and in this case it would be cares and concerns about the environment. Had a more influential leader within the organization approached Betsy Andress with the proposal that the University join the BRBA, I think that the entire project could have been completed in two weeks. It is very difficult to come into any formal organization from the outside and attempt to change its course.

Not only can leadership impact the organization, but the organization can impact leadership. The “Formal Organizations” class notes included a very interesting diagram titled “Impact of Organizational Context on Leadership.” This chart indicates the effects that power, purpose, structure, and performance can have on an organization’s leadership. In the case of my project and the University of Richmond, I will designate Mrs. Andress as a part of the organization’s leadership. She has legitimate power granted to her in the form of her position. As a fairly autonomous member of the purchasing department, she has the power to choose many of her own projects and directions. On the other hand, her choices are constrained by the purpose of the organization. She is required to “focus on and accomplish” the organization’s purposes (“Impact of Organizational Context on Leadership”). Her time for extraneous projects is limited by the demands of the
organization. In this case, the University’s purposes did not include the BRBA. These two variables, power and purpose, are the main ones that factored into my work within the structure of the University of Richmond.

THE CORE

When I was sitting in Dr. Klenke’s “Leading Groups” class or Dr. Ciulla’s “Critical Thinking” class as a junior, I never thought I would ever need anything they were teaching. I thought, “How difficult can all of this stuff be? I can’t believe that I need to learn this in class!” Now that I am wrapping up my experiences as a student in classes like those, I realize with a deep and mature understanding that everything I have learned in those classes will be relevant to my life at one time or another. Working on my senior project, I realize that I have already relied on much of that acquired knowledge.

In “Critical Thinking,” my classmates and I were exposed to an area in which few of us had previous experience. We learned the importance of logic, research design, and criticism of arguments. These are lessons we have taken with us throughout the past two years. This class was relevant to my specific senior project in one main dimension: logic. I had to know how to make logical, rational, solid arguments and proposals. Had I visited Mrs. Andress or Mr. Lane or Mrs. Monday without having a coherent argument of why joining the BRBA is a good idea, I never would have come as far on this project as I have. I needed critical thinking skills to develop and convey my vision—a vision I wanted others to accept as their own. Dr. Ciulla’s syllabus for the class says, “Leaders also need to know how to present persuasive arguments. Perhaps the most important feature of critical thinking is that it helps to develop imagination and vision.” These two benefits of critical thinking were employed by and matured through their inclusion in my senior project.
I also employed knowledge gleaned from another of Dr. Ciulla's courses: "Ethics and Leadership." This class taught me the importance of the moral imagination and the moral responsibilities that accompany leadership. In the case of my project, I see the University of Richmond as a leader with much responsibility to its students and community. By making a pledge to work to protect the environment, the University will accept its moral responsibilities as an institution. While accepting its own responsibility by joining the BRBA, the University is shaping the moral environment of its community. Letting that community know that the University values the environment and is willing to make a stand for it, the school will hopefully instill similar values in others.

On a more personal level, I was able to employ my classroom experience to "form a compelling vision and motivate people to bring about change . . . [based on my] ability to conceptualize and communicate why [my] goals are morally good" ("Ethics and Leadership" Syllabus). I focused on my broad goals of changing the University community for the better and improving the environment. Translating these goals into a concrete plan to recruit the University of Richmond to join the BRBA required me to determine the merits of such a plan. These merits included leaving a better heritage to succeeding generations by advocating for the environment. Fortunately, I was able to communicate my vision and its moral attributes to others. They have accepted that vision and have chosen to strive to reach it.

Dr. Klenke's core courses were not as relevant to my project as Dr. Ciulla's, but do merit consideration in relation to my specific project. The "History and Theory of Leadership" class stressed the application of leadership theories and "concepts to
contemporary leadership situations” (“History and Theory” Syllabus). My reader would know I was lying if I claimed to do this in the course of my project. Yet, when I look back over class notes and peruse Yukl’s textbook, I find that this is not a difficult task. The theories I found most relevant to my project, and to the manner in which I conduct myself on a daily basis, are Role Theory and Expectancy Theory. Both theories attempt to explain why leaders act in certain ways.

The Role Theory asserts that the leader’s perception of his or her role’s requirements influences the way in which he or she fills the role. In my case, I perceived my role in this project as one that required an intense amount of work, a deep interest in and concern for the project, a reflective approach, and a representativeness of the Jepson School. Indeed, these were the objectives that I expected myself to meet in my role as project leader. Similarly, the Expectancy Theory states that “a leader’s expectancies about the consequences of various behavior options can be used to explain the leader’s choice of behavior” (Yukl, 1989). For example, in the week and a half lapse in my project when I was waiting for different people to return my calls and report their individual progress, I took no action. I expected that if I called them again I would be intruding on their time, upsetting them, and possibly losing them as allies in my project. My perception of the consequences of follow-up calls prevented me from pushing forward.

These theories can be useful in explaining different points of view about why a leader takes certain actions or why followers react in specific ways. Yet, in actual, practical, everyday situations, I do not believe they have much merit. No one, leader or follower, is going to stop in the middle of a meeting and say or think, “Wow, we are all acting the way we are for reason’s best explained by Fiedler’s
Contingency Model of situational variables' effects on a leader's traits and effectiveness. I just do not see these theories providing practical information and knowledge. Instead their use lies in the realm of academia. Their merit comes in the analysis of leadership and in the exploration of the theoretical, not practical, aspects of the disciple.

The final core course, “Leading Groups,” has the same characteristics as the “History and Theories” course. The information I took from that class is useful to examine and explain group processes in retrospect, but such theories do not have practical, applicable value.

If you consider that all of the people with whom I met and I were a group, we were a highly unusual, yet effective group. We were unusual in that we never came together for discussion or work sessions. Our common group membership was held together by my coordination, a strong dedication to a common vision, and telephone conversations. We were effective in that we almost reached our goal (and more than likely will reach it in the near future). We also had effective, productive group dynamics with each group member accepting responsibility for some aspect of the project. Overall, it was an excellent group to work with and lead toward a worthwhile goal.

BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION AND CORE

Beyond the required core courses and integrative/experiential courses of the Leadership Studies curriculum, I was enrolled in six other classes. Two of them were highly relevant to my senior project, while the others provided little insight or material for reflection. The least relevant courses were “Leadership Of and In Community Organizations,” and “Leadership Study Abroad.” There were two
classes that had a slight bit of relevance. The first was "Decision Making." In many ways, this course resembled the "Leading Groups" and "History and Theories" classes. The most striking resemblance was the emphasis on theory and decision making style, not the practical use of decision making techniques. In regard to my senior project, I can use the theory I learned in the classroom and apply it to my decision making process. For example, I had to decide what the course and scope of my project would be. I did indeed go through a six step decision making process. First I identified the problem—"I need a senior project. What am I going to do?" Second, I gathered information—I looked for information about what the requirements of the course were and how they would best be met. Third, I generated and evaluated alternatives—Meeting with Mrs. Ware and conversations with other class members introduced me to several possible topics, and their merits. The next step was to make a choice—I chose the BRBA as my project's target. Then I had to implement my decision—This implementation is still underway. Finally, I monitored my implemented decision—This is a constant process that is also ongoing. It is simple to look back and apply this process to steps I actually took, but when I was in the midst of making my decisions, I did not stop and think, "O.K., now it is time to implement my decision." I still think that this theoretical angle is best used for academia, but I can see that it might be useful in actual application. If it is, it must require a skill that takes time and practice to develop. It is a skill I have not yet mastered.

A second course that was slightly relevant to my project was "Service Learning." Although this was my favorite class in the Jepson School, it had little connection to my senior project. Regardless, I was able to employed one aspect of the course in my current situation. It is the aspect of the reflective practitioner. I took from "Service
Learning" the ability to reflect on my experiences as they are happening and to apply those reflections to other aspects of my life. This is a very valuable skill and probably the one I will cherish the most from my time in college. It is a skill that is coming in handy as I write this paper. It is a skill that allows me to reflect on the past four months in particular and the past two years in general to bring my college experience to a conclusion.

The classes that were most important to my senior project were "The Leader As Change Agent" and "Formal Organizations." Since the "Formal Organizations" class has previously been discussed, I will not address it again at this point, but will move on to the "Change Agent" class. When I think of my role in my senior project, I was a change agent myself. I was trying to change the course and mission of an organization by instilling a partnership in support of and a respect for the global environment. And, as I learned in the classroom, being an agent of change takes a great deal of dedication to the issue, hard work, perseverance, and a strong desire to succeed. Throughout the course of my project, I doubted that I had any of these qualities. When I became thoroughly frustrated and wanted to quit, I thought that I did not have the perseverance and desire to achieve my goals. Yet, in the end, I found that my dedication to the environment, and my strong desire to be successful, aided me in the development of my personal perseverance and hard work.

Reflecting on the "Change Agent" class makes me think of all of the leaders we studied. Mr. Stetlinius changing a large corporation, Mrs. Edelman changing the focus of government and society, environmentalists changing the directions of corporations and governments. All of them have the courage to envision a world
that is improved in some aspect, to translate that vision into a specific strategy, and
to implement that strategy for the common good. I feel inadequate comparing
myself to people such as Mrs. Edelman. Regardless, she and people like her are my
role models. I want to continue to be an agent of change in my community, in my
workplace, and in my home. I want to make my world increasingly better for myself
and others.

I WISH, I WISH . . .

I wish that I had taken two other classes that have been offered in the Jepson School.
I believe that they would have been instrumental in the completion of my senior
project. The first is “Leadership and Motivation.” I could have used information
from this class to motivate the people I was working with to get in high gear with
this project so that it might be completed by now. I found through this project that it
is much easier to gain someone’s support for an idea than their actions to make the
idea a reality. I might have found out why this is so and how to change it in
“Motivation.” The second class I regret not taking is “Understanding and Leading
Individuals.” I would assume that this class would be relatively theoretical as with
“Leading Groups,” but it still might have offered some useful insights when I was
dealing with my “group members” on an individual basis.

PROFESSOR JULI’S LEADERSHIP CLASSES

By working with my senior project, I realized that there are many aspects of
leadership that are currently not being taught in the classroom. A class I would be
interested in seeing developed would be a class titled “Frustration, Failure, and
Leadership.” It would be a class that addresses how to overcome obstacles with a
positive frame of mind, and how to help other get beyond those obstacles. The class
would address what it is like to never reach your goals as a leader, what it is like to
have your vision torn away. These are issues that every leader must deal with from
time to time. These are also issues from which the student of leadership as well as the practitioner can learn. There are many famous quotations about failure. Mary Pickford said, "This thing we call 'failure' is not the falling down, but the staying down." Vernon Law said, "Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first, the lesson afterward." And, Confucius said, "The gem cannot be polished without friction, man not perfected without trials." These thoughts express my feelings that failure is an important part of life. We should never let failure get in our way, but let its lessons become a part of us to take into other endeavors.

The second class I would like to see developed would be called "Strategizing." It would be a combination of the "Critical Thinking" and "Decision Making" classes and would also include material about overcoming obstacles, as with the "Frustration and Failure" class. My senior project required an effective strategy. I needed to know who to talk to when and where to continue from each point. I needed to know how to combine my vision, mission, goals, group members, and the University of Richmond to devise a process that would deliver me and my project to our desired endpoint in the least amount of time. I think that a class addressing these issues would have been helpful in my project and would have offered information and knowledge that I could take with me in life.

I am sure that there are many different classes that the Jepson faculty would like to offer. I hope that in the future they ponder the possibilities of teaching classes such as "Strategizing" and "Frustration and Failure."

WRAPPING UP

When I first started thinking about what I was going to write in the final report on my senior project, I was pessimistic. I did not believe that I had learned anything
from my project, much less enough to write a long paper. Now that I am nearing the end of my project and paper, I see that I have learned a great deal from my senior project and from my time in the Jepson School.

Primarily, I learned what I was supposed to. I am able to do everything that the Jepson School's Curricular Goals intended. I can "develop cooperation and teamwork while inspiring commitment and trust." I can "imagine worthwhile visions of the future and inspire others to join in bringing about change when desirable or necessary." I will be able to continue my development as a leader throughout my life. Beyond these issues that I was expected to learn, I have learned some very valuable lessons that I do not think could ever be taught in a classroom.

First, I learned that anyone can be a leader. All it takes is a vision and a dedication of that vision. I learned that leadership often requires a great deal of courage and perseverance. There are many obstacles to be faced, but most of them can be overcome. I learned that leadership carries with it many costs and rewards. The person who is willing to hold out for the rewards ill be the most effective leader. I learned that leadership is not what the textbooks say it is all of the time. It takes real hands-on experience to learn what leadership is all about. I learned that leaders must be realistic about what lies before them, but not so realistic that that they can no longer dream and envision a better future.

I have learned much that I could never put into words, but that will walk with me throughout my life and every endeavor.
References


MEASUREMENT SURVEY
BUSINESS FORM

The National Recycling Coalition's Buy Recycled Business Alliance

Company name: ________________________________

Company contact name: _________________________ Phone: __________________________

Address: ________________________________

Business classification (please check one):  □ Manufacturer  □ Retailer
□ Service  □ Other

Purchases of recycled products

Required Information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1991 (if available)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For internal consumption</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For external (manufactured products)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Optional Information:

1. Company goal for 1993 recycled purchases (if any): $ ____________________________

2. Examples of new products with recycled content that you began purchasing in 1992:

3. Examples of any unique products, now purchased with recycled content. Please indicate percentage of recycled content.

Release authorization for Optional Information (Sections 2 and 3 only).

Signature: _________________________ Date: _________________________

Instructions on reverse side.
APPENDIX II

April 11, 1994

To: Cathy Moran
From: Juli Finnell (281-7984)

Re: Proposal for the Buy Recycled Business Alliance

The responsibilities that would be given to the University Food and Auxiliary Services Office should the University of Richmond join the Buy Recycled Business Alliance are few.

1. Make a commitment to increase your purchases of recycled content products. There is no minimum requirement for this.

2. Annually report the dollar amount of recycled content products purchased.

3. Annually report any examples of new or unique products with recycled content being purchased.

At this point, it appears the University Purchasing Office will coordinate the program. It would be to this office that you would submit your annual reports.

If you have any comments, questions, or concerns about this proposal, please contact me as soon as possible. I would appreciate your feedback.

Thank you.