

During this course, I've gained great understanding of what it means to be a digital leader in today's world. Each module we were assigned built on each other and shows how leadership isn't just directly being involved in a traditional leadership position. The lessons I've learned have helped me recognize how leadership extends beyond an office or desk but online through social media, blog posts, and websites. From understanding digital blunders to developing a professional leadership plan, each topic gave me a new perspective into how to use technology responsibly and lead effectively in this new digital age.

During the first few weeks of the class we learned about digital footprints and digital blunders. A digital footprint is information we leave behind every time we use the internet. This can include social media posts, search history, emails, cookies from websites, and receipts. This unit really made me understand that once something is posted or done online it is essentially permanent in the space. Understanding this made me think about what I post and how I conduct myself online anytime I am using it. Future employers also can gain access to this information making it even more important to be careful online. Digital footprints are and digital blunders can go hand in hand. These are mistakes people make online. These mistakes can happen a lot ways but the most common are carelessness or lack of review before posting. Examples could be posting inappropriate content, unapproved content, or spreading misinformation. Learning about digital blunders reminded me how easy it is for one misstep to spread quickly online. As a future digital leader in the field I wish to build my career in, I further understand how my online interactions and use can affect me and how I am viewed as a future digital leader.

Social media management was probably my biggest takeaway from the course. I use social media on multiple apps for multiple hours a day. As a consistent user of social media I was quite familiar how its use can both positively and negatively affect a user and its followers. What I didn't understand prior to this class was how much time and management professional users spend on the back end to display on the front end. This module made me see how important strategy can be when using social media for business endeavors and how a great plan can provide even greater benefits. We also explored different sites to build audiences and find platforms to learn from. Aside from learning different techniques and strategies, I wasn't very familiar with the certificate programs LinkedIn provided. It's a great way to not only learn new information outside the classroom, but boost the value of a resume by showing employers applicable certifications.

Digital leading ties all of the modules together. The term seems very broad because it covers a vast area of information but it's the most important key concept of the class. It's about using technology to inspire, guide, and influence others in a positive way. A digital leader is able to utilize all of the modules and certifications gained in the class to build a brand, attract an audience, and lead them. I learned that empathy, transparency, and critical thinking are very important for success. Ever since the covid pandemic, digital interactions are at an all time high. It's crucial that a digital leader excel in all the listed areas to be successful in a day and are where work is primarily done on a screen and through the internet. This can define your digital legacy, another term we learned in this class. Leaving a positive digital legacy should also be at the forefront of importance when becoming and carrying yourself as a digital leader. A great leader not only wants to lead by active example, they should also strive to lead by lasting impact. In the

digital age this makes a digital legacy all the more important. Anything posted by a user can be linked back to its original creator. In the event a digital leader passes away, their legacy has the potential to live on because of the content they created and posted on the internet.

I am very thankful for all of the information I have obtained in this class. When I first switched my major I didn't exactly know what to expect. I started off as a Mechanical engineer and moved to business management. I was hung up on business calculus and made my final switch into the leadership courses. I can happily say that this has been well worth it so far. I feel very confident in my abilities to be a future digital leader. I have a better understanding of my online presence and how I can curate new strategies to be successful. Case studies have helped me see real life examples of what works and what doesn't. Certifications have helped me bolster my resume. Research papers have helped me understand different leaders and their philosophies. I am very happy that I enrolled in CPD417 and I look forward to the second half of this semester.