Create a Podcast (A, I, H)

This is a major undertaking and can be used as a course-long project, or, with some advance support from campus IT staff or an experienced student, introduced early in the term and taught in stages (scaffolded, with rubrics for each stage) over a period of 2–3 weeks.

Have students form small work teams to develop a podcast (audio recording that can be shared with others online) on a given leadership theory. Students should discuss the kinds of research questions that interest them about the theory--for example, does it work in all kinds of situations? Do men and women use it the same way? What do followers like about this kind of leadership? How do leaders acquire these traits or learn these behaviors? Then have students choose people to interview about these questions, such as campus administrators, campus staff, community leaders, religious leaders in the community, and so on. After contacting interviewees and gaining permission to record the interviews, students will have audio recordings they can edit into a narrative about a particular leadership approach.

You may use a free service such as Audacity to help create these podcasts. Some decisions that need to be made:

* What format will be required? How many interviews are expected? Will students add their own commentary in between interviewee statements to create cohesion and a story line? What length is required? 5 min is a good start. Will students be expected to use music as part of the podcast? If so, they should check out Freemusic.org to find out what is available without a special use license. Will you ask them to create a script first?
* What resources are available on campus? Students can use iTunes for starters. They may need USB microphones for better sound quality. What recording software is available on campus? Once they have recorded the interviews, how will they convert the file into a podcast? What editing tools are available post-production?
* Where will you upload the podcast? On a department website? Campus website? On WordPress?

The objective of this assignment is to have students learn about a leadership theory by *doing*. Through the interviews what did they learn about the theory that they didn’t know before? How can they create a cohesive perspective or “story” about the theory in their podcast? A quality podcast would be a good addition to a student’s portfolio.

Class discussion: How can leaders use podcasts to influence followers to achieve a common goal?