In the December 2013 issue of *Young Exceptional Children*, DEC Executive Board member, Michael Barla, acknowledged that family members, practitioners, trainers, administrators, and students are all leaders in our field. He then encouraged DEC members to reflect upon their own leadership capabilities and discover ways to increase their opportunities for leadership (Figure 1). To support this effort, we present a summary of 18 voices from the field representing the above listed groups at the 2013 Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families in the National Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Leadership Summit.

The summit was held to share perceptions of what is needed to build, nurture, and preserve leadership capital in ECSE. The participants were nominated by their peers as leaders in the field and represented researchers, faculty, program administrators, teachers, other personnel, and families of young children who receive special education services. Forum discussions considered (a) current leadership needs at all levels of ECSE; (b) future leadership talent needs at all levels of ECSE; and (c) necessary actions to develop a cadre of leaders who are prepared to take on leadership roles in ECSE.

Data analysis of transcriptions and recordings of the discussions revealed group consensus about (a) leaders needing specific skills, attitudes, and knowledge; (b) teams of leaders being necessary at all levels of the system; and (c) intentionally preparing and supporting leaders in each level through professional development (LaRocco, Bruns, Gupta, & Sopko, 2014). In discussions about current and future leadership talent, participants discussed the need for working knowledge of the ECSE field and maintaining an ethic of accountability. Participants also suggested leaders need to feel passion for their work; engage in ongoing reflection to increase their own self-awareness; seek and use input from others while maintaining a growth orientation; and take risks.

**Figure 1**

A quote from a participant

“Leadership at every level needs to come out strong in support of accountability and then figure out what the people under you need to know and learn in order to bring them to the same place.”

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