
The Mathis Group's Messenger

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The Lost Art of Leadership

Leadership styles have definitely changed over the past 25-30 years. In years past, micromanaging was considered good leadership. Not letting your employees make any decisions and telling them what to do was the norm. Today, managers seek input from their employees and empower them to make decisions without standing over their shoulder every step of the way.



There's nothing a leader can do to kill an organization faster than not delegating tasks to their employees. Other ways to destroy your company are to:

- Forget to create long term value
- Be reactive rather than proactive
- Follow the "new flavor of the month" or new fad
- Ridicule and disrespect subordinates
- Be close-minded
- Only look at the bottom line

In order to be a good leader, you must be able to get workers to work with the same intensity and commitment you would. You need to present a clear vision with an optimistic attitude. Creating an incredible management team and delegating authority will not only improve morale and efficiency, but it will also cut down on your responsibilities. A good leader is also always looking for ways to raise up the next generation of leadership. He or she looks for leadership skills in employees.

Big thinkers are specialists in creating positive, forward-looking, optimistic pictures in their own minds and in the minds of others.

David J. Schwartz
Motivation expert

To be a successful leader, there are five qualities you should possess.

Be a Responsible Leader

First, in order to be a responsible leader, you must accept the fact that you have to be responsible. Be accountable, truthful, and unbiased in everything that you do. Try to inspire and stimulate your employees to do the best they can. Be willing to listen what they have to say.

Be a Maturing and Developing Leader

A good leader is always on the lookout for ways to develop his or her skills and gain knowledge. He or she will search ways to grow. Having an ego and thinking that you know all there is to know is the fastest way to kill your ability to mature as a leader. When praise is given from upper management, share the credit with everyone involved.

Be a Proficient Leader

Proficient leaders are ones who have a clear direction in where the company or department should go. They will plan well and communicate the direction to everyone. They are willing to mentor and coach workers to enable them to make decisions. They have an open door policy to supply help and feedback to maintain momentum.

Be an Inspiring Leader

An inspiring leader is one who motivates his or her employees to become better and work harder. This leader is respectful to the workers and values their opinions. He or she has integrity and is trustworthy.

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You can believe that when he or she says something, it will get done.

Be a Communicating Leader

Communication is the key for any organization to be productive. Help your employees to do the best job possible by giving as much information as feasible and providing additional data as it arises. Make sure that everyone is aware of your expectations. Give due dates for reports and tasks. Don't simply give an assignment and not be available when questions pop up. Give ideas when requested.

How do you know if you are or will make a good leader? Knowing the answers to these questions will help you understand what kind of leader you are.

1. Do I really listen to the employees, or am I going through the motions?
2. What is our highest priority, people or things?
3. Am I leading out of power or influence?
4. Am I willing to empower and equip the workforce?
5. Do I fully understand the difference between leadership and dictatorship?



There are also some enemies of leadership of which you should be aware.

- Self-Centeredness--thinking that you are the best. Never listening to any opinion that opposes your own.
- Ignorance--not realizing the potential and knowledge your employees have. Until you begin to tap into the resource that is right under your nose, your department or company will never reach its fullest potential.

• Gossip or slandering others--talking about someone else behind his or her back is one of the quickest ways to lose that person's trust and respect. If someone doesn't respect you, he or she will not be willing to give you 100% of their effort.



• Bad attitude--being around someone with a bad attitude often makes others have a bad attitude as well. If your workers know that you don't like your job or the task of which you've been put in charge, it will affect their behavior.

Good leadership doesn't have to be a lost art forever. Knowing how to improve your skills will not only improve your employees' morale, but their productivity as well.



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