



INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP

INCREASE YOUR
EFFECTIVENESS AND
GROWTH

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Why Great Leaders are Uncommon



Author Warren Bennis stated, *“We need more than one leader. As never before, we need leaders in all of our organizations and our institutions. We need leaders in every community, corporation, and country.”* We need people with official leadership titles and those who rise to the occasion to lead without an official title. More leaders are needed, but not just any type of leader. We need great leaders who positively influence others toward a common purpose and vision. Great leaders are needed in business, non-profits, governments, community relations, and in homes.

However, there is a sad reality. There are two reasons why an average or potentially great leader does not become or remain great. Let’s discuss them.

There is a shortage of leaders who lead with conviction. In recent years we have seen corporate executives, government leaders, spiritual advisers, and non-profit directors fall from greatness. The main reason for this is because the leader chose to compromise their character or integrity. When this happens they typically begin to cheat, lie, manipulate, bully, intimidate, cut corners, and do whatever

they can. This is done so they can uphold their position, personally gain, or to obtain the results they want. When a leader begins to compromise and act unethically or immorally they start walking on a faulty path that will eventually collapse.

There are other times when a leader loses concentration on their main roles, they forsake essential attributes of leadership, or they are not skilled enough for the position. These leaders could uphold their standards, convictions, and values but they fail in one or more of the above areas. The roles, attributes of a leadership position, and skill level should be an essential focus. When a leader drifts away from one or more of those areas they will soon become ineffective.

What the world needs now are leaders, like you, to step up and be great leaders. Place being a person of character and integrity as one of your main concerns. Avoid being tempted to compromise on what you know is right. Take the time to place your attention on your most important leadership roles, adapt the leadership attributes most necessary for your position, and to sharpen your skills. I know, it's easier said than done but we can do it. You are more likely to become a great leader if you do these things.

Great leaders create a positive ripple across the entire organization and into the community that adds value to the employees, stockholders, customers, potential customers, and onlookers. These leaders impact tomorrow for the better and leave a lasting legacy for the next generation. Everyone wins when a great leader is present. Take a stand and choose to be a great leader.

Question:*How do you remain a great leader?*

The One Required Leadership Quality



Author Warren Bennis said, *“Successful leadership is not about being tough or soft, sensitive or assertive, but about a set of attributes. First and foremost is character.”* The required leadership quality all leaders must have is character. Those with good character live out their beliefs, values, and convictions. Making sure their attitude, behavior, and actions are in line with those areas. Good character is about consistently making good choices no matter who is watching or who will know about it. Failing to be a person of good character can cause you to fail in your leadership role and could negatively affect those around you. Here are 5 ways to have and maintain your character:

1. Lead yourself

The first and often hardest person you will ever lead is the person in the mirror, yourself. Leading yourself well positions you to make moral and ethical choices.

When a leader fails to lead themselves they can fall prey to making the wrong choices, not aligned with good character. This can be especially true during crisis or turbulent times. Focus on leading yourself and the right choices will follow.

2. Chose never to compromise

Predetermine what you will do before you are faced with a choice or decision that could break your character. Knowing beforehand what you will do in times of temptation or trials can help you to make the right choices and not compromise on your personal beliefs, values, or convictions. It's always easier to settle for yourself what you will never compromise on before you are faced with the decision.

3. Associate with the right people

Spend time with and around those who have a proven track record of good character. At the same time you should distance yourself from those with bad or questionable character. You will be positively influenced and have stronger character if the group you associate with the most has character.

4. Establish safeguards

Having character safeguards allows your character to be secure. You should have a system in place for if you begin to act out of good character. The best way for you to do this is to have people who closely see you work and who can hold you accountable for your actions and attitudes.

5. Set high personal standards

Businessman Ray Kroc said, *"The quality of a leader is reflected in the standards they set for themselves."* Your standards should be so high that you will never come remotely close to crossing the line of right and wrong. People should never question or be unclear about whether you are or have been making moral or ethical choices. They should always be able to see you are a person of unquestionable character. Leaders should also promptly and appropriately discipline any team member not being moral or ethical.

Questions: *What would you add to the list? How do you maintain character in your life?*

The Powerful Principle Of Stopping To Propel Forward



Great leaders are driven to perform and execute. There are times though that the best option for a leader is to stop. To practice the lost art of stopping and intentionally doing nothing to refocus on certain things that would propel them forward. Stopping to propel forward is less about physically going or doing and all about mental actions. If done on a regular basis the principle of stopping can actually position you to move forward and into new levels of success. Here are 4 reasons why every leader should stop on a regular basis.

1. Stop to plan

Leaders must balance proper planning with action. There are times when you should work and there are times when you should stop to plan and strategize. Proper planning allows for projects to be efficiently completed and launched. The key is that the larger the project or goal the more you need to plan. Stopping long

enough to plan can excel the team and organization into new levels of success. Always remember the words of time management expert Alan Lakin stated, “*Failing to plan is planning to fail.*”

2. Stop to process

Leaders live in a fast pace work environment. The decisions leaders have to make and the answers they have to provide are expected to be given in a timely manner, often very quickly. In law enforcement and the military the decisions could be a matter of life and death. In the business world it means a significant gain or loses in sales and overall profits.

One decision could greatly impact the organizations future for either the good or bad. This is why it’s crucial to stop and process the decisions you are making, so you can determine the best option or choice. This is especially true when it comes to the high risk or critical decisions or answers you have to give. Stopping to process can excel you and the organization forward.

3. Stop to think

Thinking is one of the most valuable things a leader can do. Leaders who spend time thinking on a regular basis will always be exceling forward. In 6 Thinking Principles to Excel your Leadership I shared these principles that you should consider applying:

- The principle of deep thinking- Take time to really dig into and think about an idea or thought for an extend amount of time.
- The principle of big thinking- Think outside of your normal imagination and into the realm of your desired future or achievements.
- The principle of priority thinking- Focus your thinking time on the most important ideas or topics.
- The principle of strategic thinking- This allows you to properly plan and strategize about the next course of action.
- The principle of future thinking- Taking time to think about the future allows a leader to clarify and properly plan for the future.
- The principle of executing your thinking- This principle is about putting action to your thinking.

Stop and adapt these principles into your thinking time. It will allow you to excel

forward in your leadership.

4. Stop to reflect

Author Peter Drucker wisely said, *“Follow effective action with quiet reflection. From the quiet reflection will come even more effective action.”* Before reflecting on outside factors you should consider reflecting on yourself. You should take time to reflect on your emotions, attitude, behaviors, and reactions. Ask yourself what you could have done better and what you could have done well in the situation. Once you have taken the proper amount of time to reflect inwardly you can then reflect on outside factors like: a team member’s performance, a problem or issue at hand, a current project, or the release of a product or service. Stopping to reflect can help you to propel forward.

Question:*How do you practice stopping so you can position yourself to propel forward?*

Four Proven Ways to Add Value to People



There is one thing you can do that will increase your effectiveness and leadership capacity. It's something everyone can and should consistently do. The one thing is to add value to other people. Adding value simply means you are intentional about serving and using your authority in a positive way. I've found people won't respect or value your leadership unless they know you care and value them. There are practical and proven ways to show value to others. Here are 4 of those ways:

1. Lift people up with your words

You should speak kind, encouraging, and uplifting words to those you talk with. Most people struggle to some extent with low self-esteem. Your words have the power to raise a person to an entirely new level of confidence, self-worth, and can help them see how great they are. The key is to use specific and timely words.

Make it a goal in every conversation to complement, encourage, and speak

positivity. It might be complementing the person's attire, pointing out and praising their areas of strengths or what they excel at doing, or speaking an encouraging word to them. When you see someone doing superb work or putting in the extra effort take the time to thank them and show you appreciate them.

2. Support people by offering to help them

Being present and on the front lines shows people you are willing to support them if needed. I work in a 24 hour a day facility that provides care for children in protective services. Often the children we serve have behavior issues and act out aggressively with staff and other children.

I have a simple philosophy that really helps me to add value to staff members. When the children are calm and there are no major issues or crisis happening I'm not as present. The staff are competent and can handle those times or miniature issues that might arise. But, when there is a child on a crisis, being assaultive or aggressive with staff, I'm present and ready to step in to help (here is how I lead through a crisis). Staff appreciate a leader who is present and ready to assist.

You can do the same at your place of employment. Make sure you are present and let those you lead know you are there to support them if needed, especially during times of demand. Ask your coworker or boss if you can help them complete a project or task. Simply say, "Do you need me to help out with anything or can I take someone off your plate?" These simple things really do add value to other people.

3. Bring people gifts

Gifts are a great way to add value to others. It shows people you care and appreciate them. You should take time to learn about the things the receiver enjoys or likes doing. It might be their favorite foods or drinks, hobbies or recreational activities they participate in, or something on their bucket or dreams list. After you have learned about what they like or enjoy you can purchase a gift accordingly. Know the time you took to learn about the person and buying a gift that matters to them is more important than how much it costs. A small and meaningful gift shows the person you value them and their work.

4. Encourage other people's professional growth

You can add value to people by investing in their professional growth and development. You should inspire and encourage the people you lead and those

around you to grow in the skills that will most help them be successful in their position. Professional growth can help a person perform better at work and allows them to be in a position to promote into higher positions of authority. I value the supervisors who have taken a personal interest in my professional growth; they are a significant reason why I've been able to be successful in my position.

There are practical ways you can encourage professional growth. Consider regularly sharing with your people the things you are learning about, taking time for coaching sessions, provide timely constructive criticism that promotes growth, and give them relevant resources. These things can help the people around you move toward their potential.

Question:*How do you add value to your people?*

About

Dan Black's desire is to help others become better people and leaders through his writing and resources. His goal is to write content that helps you reach your leadership potential. He posts about once a week. The topics posted include: leadership, personal development, strengths, and success.

Dan Black has published two books, [The Leadership Mandate](#) and [The Little Book of Personal Growth](#).

To learn more, [visit the website](#).