



Becoming an Ideal Leader

When you are at work, do you get frustrated because things don't seem to be happening the way they're supposed to be? You see people milling around but nothing gets accomplished. And in the daily hustle and bustle, do you feel that your goals remain just that – goals. Then maybe it's time for you to stand up and do something about it.

Most people are content just to stand around listening for orders. It isn't unusual to adopt a follow-the-leader mentality. But maybe, somewhere inside of you, you feel the desire to make things happen – to be the head, not the tail. If so, leadership will suit you fine.

Some people believe that great leaders are made, not born. Yes, it may be true that some people are born with natural talents. However, without practice, without drive, without enthusiasm, and without experience, there can be no true development in leadership.

You must also remember that good leaders are continually working and studying to improve their natural skills. This takes a commitment to constantly improve in whatever endeavor a person chooses.

First of all, let's define leadership. **To be a leader, one must be able to influence others to accomplish a goal, or an objective.** He or she contributes to the organization and cohesion of a group.

Contrary to what most people believe, **leadership is not about power.** It is not about harassing people or driving them using fear-based tactics. It is about

encouraging others towards the goal of the organization. It is putting everyone on the same page and helping them see the big picture of the organization. **You must be a leader not a boss. There is a difference.**

First of all, you have to get people to follow you. How is this accomplished?

People follow others when they see a clear sense of purpose. People will only follow you if they see that you know where you are going. Remember that bumper sticker? The one that says, don't follow me, I'm lost too? The same holds true for leadership. If you yourself do not know where you're headed to, chances are people will not follow you at all.

You yourself must know the vision of the organization. Having a clear sense of hierarchy, knowing who the bosses are, who to talk to, the organization's goals and objectives, and how the organization works is the only way to show others you know what you are doing.

Being a leader is not about what you make others do. It's about who you are, what you know, and what you do. You are a reflection of what your subordinates must be.

Studies have shown that one other basis of good leadership is the trust and confidence your subordinates have of you. If they trust you they will go through hell and high water for you and for the organization. **Trust and confidence is built on good relationships, trustworthiness, and high ethics.**

The way you deal with your people, and the relationships you build will lay the foundation for the strength of your group. The stronger your relationship, the stronger their trust and confidence is in your capabilities.

Once you have their trust and confidence, you may now proceed to communicate the goals and objectives you are to undertake. **Communication is a very important key to good leadership.** The knowledge and technical expertise you have must be clearly imparted to other people. A good leader has good judgment. You must be able to assess situations, weigh the pros and cons of any decision, and actively seek out a solution.

It is this judgment that your subordinates will come to rely upon. Therefore, good decision-making is vital to the success of your organization. Leaders are not do-it-all heroes. Leaders recognize and take advantage of the skills and talents their

subordinates have. Only when you come to this realization will you be able to work as one cohesive unit.

Remember being a leader takes a good deal of work and time. It is not learned overnight. Remember, also, that it is not about just you. It is about you and the people around you.

So, do you have the drive and the desire to serve required of leaders? Do you have the desire to work cooperatively with other people? Then start now. **Take your stand and be leader today.**