

Leadership and Followership

“The leader is one who mobilizes others toward a goal shared by leaders and followers... Leaders, followers and goals make up the three equally necessary supports for leadership.”

The nature of leadership can perhaps be best understood by turning the coin over and studying followership. Why do people follow leaders? If we can understand this, then we will be a long way down the road to creating those followers and hence becoming an effective leader.

People don't just follow anyone. You can't just say 'follow me' and expect people to follow out of the goodness of their hearts. You have to give them good reason for them to follow.

Respect for the leader

If the respect for the leader is strong, then the followers will likely accept the goal/solution being offered, even if they are not that convinced by the arguments that the leader is putting forward.

Respect for the goal/solution

When the goal/solution is respected, then the respect for the leader is not as important, although if the leader is not respected then the followers may doubt the ability of the leader to make the right choices along the way.

The best outcome, of course, is that the leader and the goal/solution they are proposing are both respected, in which followers will buy in powerfully.

-Followers and Respect: Both leader and goal/solution are important.

-Followers and Trust: I will follow someone I trust.

-Followers and Liking: I will follow someone I like.

-Followers and Support: I will follow someone who supports me.

-Early Followers: Who follows first?

Care and concern

- Followers trust the leader to take reasonable care of them.
- If you carefully avoid harming me, then I can trust you. Leaders should be constantly aware of how their actions affect people, and at the very least seek to 'do no harm'.
- If you actively care and show concern for me, then I will know that you will not hurt me.

Reliability

- Leaders need for their followers to trust that they will do as they say they will do.

Keep your promises

- A simple rule for leaders is: Keep your promises. This also means that you must be very careful in making promises. It can be convenient to promise something in the short term in order to get commitment, but if you break that promise you will find that the commitment will not be forthcoming the next time.

Honesty

- The problem with honesty is that the short-term implications can be bad for leaders. Telling the truth can be painful. It can show you up as being less competent as you wanted to appear. Giving bad news can lead to shock and dismay.

- If you always tell the truth, including the unvarnished whole truth and bad news that others might hide, then I know that when you say something, I have the complete story. Leaders are truthful, and do not shy from giving bad news.

Principle

- I will act to reduce the tension I feel.

Values

- I will follow values that provide rules for living that maintain our sense of personal integrity and allow us to live within the shared rules of a group of other people. Values tell us what we should and should not do, what is right and wrong, and what is more or less important.

Anticipation

- Anticipation can be a powerful and exciting force and we look forward to expected moments of pleasure. In fact the anticipation can be more enjoyable than the actual experience

So what?

Leadership is a verb not a noun

Being a leader is dynamic and is not a rank, title, or age

At Millard South:

Begin any direction with the pronoun "we"

Redirect behavior with "change your frame"

Request for advice with "Can I give you some feedback? (remember tone, touch, body language, eye contact)

