

Great Leaders don't Manage they Inspire

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Taking on a leadership role in any setting can be tough. Despite all the benefits of being in charge, not everyone is born a natural leader. Luckily, there are some things that even the least likely leader can do to hone management abilities and become an effective leader of an

organization. So what does it take to be an effective leader? Besides talent, it takes effort, well developed time management skills, the ability to communicate effectively and a desire to lead.

EFFORT

Even if leadership doesn't come naturally to you, a good dose of effort will make up for it. Approaching a position with hard work and dedication will make almost anyone into an effective leader. More often than not, effort implies sacrifice and discomfort, which is just what you'll have to deal with as a leader. You'll have to be willing to give up some of your free time to do a good job in order to gain respect from your colleagues.

People are not just inspired by what they hear but by what they see. Your ability to

inspire will lose significance if you are not authentic. In other words, if you are not willing to "practice what you preach" others will be unwilling to follow. When I taught my first class, one of my mentors communicated to me that students are always watching and consistency is just as much a part of inspiring as the words you say. People begin to form an opinion based on what they observe and not what they hear you say. When students see that you are making a consistent effort, they will never question when you begin to delegate assignments.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Great leaders have time management down to an art. To excel as a president, vice president or other high position in an organization, you'll have to learn to balance your responsibility. This means every waking hour counts. Most good leaders keep detailed schedules so they know exactly what to do at certain times; if you're struggling with too much to do in too little time, try creating an hour-by-hour schedule that sets aside certain blocks of time for each of your activities. Time management is all about "learning how to eat the elephant". As long as you are doing something with your time, you are making progress towards the larger goal. As a leader, it's important to stay focused on the bigger picture. You have to consistently ask the question "how does accomplishing this task bring us closer to our larger goal?" In doing so, you are less likely to get frustrated because you understand that even accomplishing the simplest goals, you are moving in the right direction. In order to accomplish the great things, we must first master the small things. You will never be able to do it all at once but certainly you will be able to do something.

Third- become one of them. The more approachable you seem the less intimidated people will be around you. You don't have to become their best friend but if you make yourself approachable, they will begin to trust you because they feel comfortable with telling you their issues and concerns. You should also make yourself approachable by being willing to listen to their feedback. When people know that you are willing to accept feedback, they believe that you are interested in their concerns. As a result, they are willing to give more of themselves to accomplish the task in front of them.

A person can have all the qualities mentioned here—natural talent, dedication, time management ability and developed communication skills—and still fail as a leader if they lack the desire to take on a role. It's crucial that you want to be the principal, vice principal, administrator, team leader or other high position in an organization if you expect

COMMUNICATION

The best leaders in any situation know how to communicate well with all kinds of people. A leadership role requires that you talk to the people in your organization, consult with your colleagues and advisors, communicate with people outside of your group, and negotiate with members of your larger community. All of this talking can be too taxing for someone who's not comfortable with public speaking. Most good communicators are friendly and unafraid of meeting new people; great leaders share these qualities. If you are not a great verbal communicator, here are some tips that will help you:

First- play to your strengths. If you are not good at verbalizing your thoughts, try finding another avenue to communicate. This could be writing, or simply communicating by example. One of the greatest leaders in the world was Mother Teresa and she was a silent leader. However, she was great at communicating through her actions.

Second- in the beginning ask your students what expectations they have of you. This will let them see that you want them to be a part of the process. Also, be sure to follow up to make sure you are meeting expectations. Conversely, you have to ask the same of your students. Expectations can only be measured if there is clarity from the beginning.

to be effective at your job. Otherwise, taking on leadership responsibilities will make you miserable, and you'll probably do a poor job. So before you accept the position, think about whether you really have a desire to do the job. If you do want it, great; a healthy desire for leadership means you're already halfway there. **TOC**