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*You do not lead by hitting people over the head—that's assault, not leadership.*

--- Dwight D. Eisenhower

Too often, we experience people who use force and threats to complete a task or gain a following. They try to demand leadership, coercing others until they receive the highest positions. They usually try to maintain a status quo, doing just enough to keep their power and nothing that could compromise their title. Everyone has had a boss, or knows of one, like this. But, the great leaders of history are never remembered for being coercive, forceful or threatening. In class we discussed the five attributes that make great leaders. My simplified definition combines these: great leaders are charismatic, passionate people who inspire others to create a change that benefits the common good.

They must have a vision or goal to obtain; they cannot be leaders if there is nowhere to lead. Very rarely will someone be willing to blindly follow, they need to know where they are going and a possible way of getting there. Supporters have to see that their leader has goals that seem obtainable and optimal. Leaders must have a plan for the future and be able to express that plan. The goal must always be kept in sight; it cannot be lost or given up on. A true leader's vision must be for the benefit of the most people and never selfish. They

must be servant leaders in the fact that they are only concerned with serving the people and leading just becomes a way to obtain that goal.

A leader also must be charismatic and passionate enough for people to listen to their ideas while creating that vision. They must be able to obtain a following and adequately portray their objectives so that people understand their concepts. A true leader's passion becomes contagious, and other people are compelled to join the cause and may become passionate about the goal themselves. Like Dorothy Edwards said, passion becomes like a "fire in the belly" that makes people act, not any force or coercion from others. I believe true, effective leaders never set out in search of a cause to lead, but rather are so passionate about a cause that they fall into their leadership. They must also be able and willing to educate the masses. An important part of sparking passion is having accurate and complete knowledge on the subject matter so the misinformation or stereotypes cannot be used against your cause.

Good leaders are also very good role models. They show the proper way to act and behave and become the ideal for the others to follow. They confirm that it is not only possible to obtain the goal; they lay the path for others to follow to their goal and show how it can and should be done. Leaders who do not model the way properly could be considered hypocritical because they talk about how to act but then do not follow their own orders. Without being a proper role model, leaders lose credibility quickly.

Good leaders enable others to act. They must assist during the process and motivate the team. They help prevent others from getting discouraged and

frustrated, and help them through the process. They are very good at not only educating and creating passion in people, but they are also excellent at giving guidelines and helping people to accomplish the goal. A good leader has wonderful communication skills. They must be willing to listen to the followers and value their opinions and views. They will encourage others to get a task done. A leader must have the mindset of a team and give everyone in the team the same opportunities to act and contribute.

What separates a manager from a leader is if they challenge the process. They must be willing to never give up or stop trying. They will exhaust every outlet possible to complete their goal within the given guidelines, but are also willing and capable of stepping out of those guidelines and even going against them. They whole heartily believe in their cause that they are willing to break usual rules or norms to get it accomplished and use unconventional ways to obtain their goal. This process can take much creativity, patience and time because it involves rewriting or recreating rules or standards to follow. Managers only follow the rules and are much more reactive, trying to accomplish a typical goal or punish inappropriate actions. Leaders, however, step outside this and try to accomplish something that has never been achieved and are in place to guide, never to punish. Leaders will always challenge the process, managers stay within the confines of the given rules. However, it is important to remember that a leader is not necessarily better or more preferred over a manager. A leader can be excellent at accomplishing change, but very bad at handling every day

occurrences and organizational skills that managers thrive in. People can also be both leaders and managers, so the two groups are not mutually exclusive.

Every good leader must also encourage the heart. Everyone becomes discouraged, especially when the project is time consuming and unconventional. Leaders must be the ones to step in with reward and praise for their followers. They must show that they appreciate and value their followers; otherwise, the followers would quit sacrificing for an ungrateful leader. People can be encouraged by monetary rewards, food, plaques and awards or in unconventional ways such as paid days off work and a special parking permit.

Obviously, no person is equally as strong in all of these categories, but rather should recognize those characteristics they are particularly good at and highlight those while working on those they are weaker with. Yet, I feel as though there is more advice for leaders than just following these attributes. To good leaders, I would encourage putting two leaders together on a project whose strengths compliment each other is also a very effective way to lead—I feel that when leading, two heads are usually better than one if they can work well together and accomplish the task at hand. No one has to face every issue alone, and leaders should be willing to share the spotlight. Having someone else's input and encouragement can also help, because leaders are also human and need help and guidance as well. A good leader should also be willing to ask for help, and having another leader or a strong group makes it much easier to find someone to help them along the way.

A leader should never be afraid to admit a mistake and learn from it. No one is perfect and things rarely ever go according to plan. A leader should be flexible enough to move on from their mistake and try it again. To do this, a leader must be able to distance themselves from a project and not let it become their identity. They must take constructive criticism not as a personal attack but rather as way to help a project grow and succeed. A successful leader must be to some degree empathetic. They must be willing to see and accept their project from others views and be considerate of the large mass other than just their own gains. Empathy helps them connect with their supporters and makes it much easier to follow someone. While maintaining empathy, a leader must also be able to see the truths and inform others of them. They cannot create illusions for their followers to make it easier, but rather must tell things like it is. This helps create a realistic working environment and allows for trust.

A leader should try to create a vision through their passion and education, be excellent role models along the way, enable others to act, be willing to challenge the process and inspire the heart of their followers. On top of these things, they must remember to be sensible and follow the advice from proven leaders to help the along the way. Most of all, they must be willing to put their idea and change first and their power level last, following the true notion of a servant leader, who plays as a team and strives to serve others and their cause. I feel as though a brief summary of all of this would be that superb leaders are charismatic, passionate people who inspire others to create a change that benefits the common good.