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A collection of articles, comments and opinion pieces from popular media and the blogosphere thematically reflecting the spirit of George C. Marshall's enduring legacy of leadership and strategic vision.

Where are you on the leadership continuum?

By Joel Peterson, Chairman, JetBlue Airways

When you ask a hundred people to describe the perfect leader, you get the same answers over and over. Most people name typical qualities like "intelligent," "decisive," "inspirational," and "forward-thinking." These unsurprising answers can mean surprisingly different things to different people. In years of teaching leadership courses to MBAs at Stanford, I've seen that what two people see as "intelligent" or "visionary" may match exactly, or might not overlap at all.

Even better, developing a sense of where you fit in each of the categories below will help you be more intentional about developing your own leadership style:

- **Decisive:** People generally say they like "buck-stops-here" type leaders. They're tough-minded. They take charge. They don't dither, delay and delegate to less decisive peers. They get stuff done.
- **Discerning:** People claim they like leaders who can distinguish between the essential and the optional. When Steve Jobs returned to Apple in 1997, he famously "put a bullet in the head" of many legacy products in order to focus on developing Macs and iPods. Being able to separate the wheat from the chaff was at the heart of his genius.
- **Visionary:** Most people say they want to work for visionary leaders, the ones who see where the world is going before others do. For them, the ability to see around corners beats the plodding, pragmatic approach some people associate with professional managers.

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The requirement to trust as a function of leadership

By Eric Basu in *Forbes*

I was sent this blog posting by LCDR BJ Armstrong on the role trust plays in

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good leadership.

Trust. In principle it sounds great, but in practice it appears to be a frightening concept to some leaders. Sometimes it even appears ineffective. One of the best example of the positive results of trust came from his study of Lord Admiral Horatio Nelson, the most celebrated Royal Navy officer in history and a renowned combat leader. His victories at defining battles like Copenhagen, The Nile, and Trafalgar have inspired generations of officers and sailors. Nelson combined the attributes of conviction, confidence, and most of all: "the natural, inborn power of trust."

The Admiral's trust of his people was electrifying. Those he believed made every effort but failed were recognized with kind words and career support just like those who succeeded. Nelson himself once wrote that "If I ever feel great, it is in never having, in thought, word, or deed, robbed any man of his fair fame." His men knew it. They knew that if he had any control over the situation, he would get them the recognition they deserved.

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Three things thoughtful leaders do

By Scott Eblin in *Government Executive*

If you're interested, there are three easy things you can do each day to create a more mindful approach to leadership. They're easy to remember because you've seen the reminder at railroad crossings for most of your life: stop, look, and listen. Here's one version of what stop, look and listen could look like in practice for a mindful leader:

- **Stop:** Take three to five minutes at least twice today to stop what you're doing and step back. If you need help remembering to stop, schedule a reminder in your calendar or use moments in your day, like waiting for a conference call to start, as triggers to stop.
- **Look:** Now that your mind is more settled from stopping, look at what's going on. What's going on with you today? What's the energy level of the people you're working with? What is their level of attention and engagement? Is their energy and attention aligned with what you need to accomplish together? If it is, great. How can you build on that? If it's not, what are your options for bringing yourself and everyone else back into the conversation?
- **Listen:** When you listen, start with yourself and then extend it to others. First, get a handle on the internal dialogue in your head. Is it productive or non-productive? If it's productive, run with it. If it's not, look (again) for something that's working and focus on that. As you listen to others, really listen. If you want to get everyone engaged, ask open ended questions and really listen to the answers.

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10 things extraordinary bosses give employees

by Jeff Haden in *Forbes*

Good bosses have strong organizational skills. Good bosses have solid decision-making skills. Good bosses get important things done. Exceptional bosses do all of the above and more. Sure, they care about their company and customers, their vendors and suppliers. But most importantly, they care to an exceptional degree about the people who work for them.

That's why extraordinary bosses give every employee:

- Autonomy and independence.
- Clear expectations.
- Meaningful objectives.
- A true sense of purpose.
- Opportunities to provide significant input.

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