

Leadership & Strategy Review

Upcoming Leadership Education Programs

June 17-18 for Presidential Management Fellows on "Succeeding in Your Public Service Career" in Washington, DC

July 18 for the National Association of Counties on "Transformational Leadership" in New Orleans

Sept. 29-Oct. 1 for the Federal Executive Institute on "Strategic Leadership" in Charlottesville, VA

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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.

Leadership qualities great executives must have

By Mark V. Hurd, President, Oracle

For reasons that aren't exactly clear to me, there's a powerful tendency to over-complicate the whole notion of leadership: what it is, why it matters, and how it manifests itself.

I'm not saying it's a simple concept to master; quite the contrary. We see the evidence of this all around us in our daily lives: whether in business, politics, sports or other endeavors large and small, it's not easy to find effective leaders who've built an enduring record of success.

But I've found that the best way to be a leader, and to help shape high-potential young people into the leaders of tomorrow, is to ensure that these five abilities are always the focal points.

Getting the strategy right.
Executing that strategy.
Putting the right people in the right places.
Managing dual priorities that others see as conflicting.
Keeping everyone focused on what matters.

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The five must-have leadership traits

By Eric Barton, *Leaderboard*

Gone are the days when middle management was expected to lead troops into some territorial battle with rivals. Disregard the old command-culture favored in the '80's. Abandon that tired business school mantra about always seeming to be the smartest one in the room.

These days, it's about collaborating, listening and treating more junior

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Become a

employees as equals. The prevailing culture for successful businesses now is a management structure that is flat, where the most junior associate has a chance to develop the next big idea.

Don't know how to get by in such a world? Here are five things you need to know to succeed today.

Trusting workplaces breed creativity. The best leaders find a way to encourage creativity in their teams. Pulling that off begins by dispelling the myth that some people just aren't creative.

Trust your intuition, sometimes. Within a generation, the concept of instinctive intuition has gone from quack science to a proven strategy for success in business.

Know when to be funny. Knowing when to use a joke can help disarm uncomfortable situations and help bosses build real relationships with their employees.

Trust in delegation. It takes faith for managers to delegate important tasks, and it's something few successfully pull off.

Top-down collaboration. Creating workplace collaboration isn't as simple as just telling employees to work together. Instead managers must give their teams specific tools, then oversee how they are being used.

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Four leadership qualities employers look for

By Nicole Fallon, *Business News Daily*

What's wrong with today's leaders? Apparently a lot. According to a recent article by the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP), nearly every industry across the country is suffering from a leadership crisis, and hiring managers aren't doing much to improve the situation.

The cure for this leadership crisis will come when employers begin exercising more care in selecting their leaders. Hiring managers should seek out the following characteristics in potential leaders.

Integrity. Are you honest? Do you keep your word? Can you be trusted to not exploit your position and the company's resources for your own purpose?

Good judgment. Good judgment is all about being willing to repair bad judgment as well as following up and evaluating your decisions to see if they were right.

Competence. Workers want to feel assured and confident that their leader knows the business inside and out.

Vision. Can you communicate and justify your vision, and impress upon your team that what they are doing is worthwhile?

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Toxic leaders and environments that breed them

By David Sloan Wilson, *Forbes*

A *National Public Radio* news investigation covers the topic of toxic leadership in the military. Once the concept of toxic leadership dawned upon the military, it was found to be pervasive. According to one estimate, 20% of U.S. Army soldiers suffer from toxic leadership, which is now defined in the Army's "leadership bible."

The problem of toxic leadership is not confined to the military. It will be a cancer in any social organization that lacks the mechanisms for controlling it. The fact that the military was taken by surprise and only discovered the problem through an investigation of high suicide rates reveals the inadequacy of current habits of thought. When we approach the same problem from an evolutionary perspective, it will not appear so new.

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Senior leaders and the big ask

By Pete Ashby

Do you assume that the more senior someone is in their leadership position, the better they are as a leader? It's not a silly assumption to make, is it? For years I assumed it to be true, notwithstanding the number of times I would come away from an event and think the contributions from those who were more junior in the group were better than those of the senior leaders.

So what are the key "interactive behaviors" required of leaders?

Being specific about what people do and why their contributions matter.

Showing understanding for the facts and feelings being expressed.

Employing questions to unleash everyone's ideas.

Building trust and providing context.

Building ownership and accountability.

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