

Leadership That Endures in a Changing World!

Churchill Samson,

[Prakash Shikshan Mandal, Islampur, Dist. Sangli]
Research Scholar, Research and Development
Department, Bharathiar, University, Coimbatore

Dr.R.Srinivasan

Associate Professor,
P.G & Research Dept of Corporate
Secretaryship Bharathidasan Govt.
College for Women (Autonomous)
Puducherry-605003, India

Abstract:

It's time to shape the future, and those who will do so are in training today. Learn what it takes to lead with courage, then follow with character. Embrace the basics, and you will master the challenges of generations to come.

"My passion is to equip you to take your place among the ranks of those who are positioned to shape the future."¹ Andy Stanley

Capable men and women will eventually catch, pass and replace the current generation of leaders, and embracing the essentials will not only excel personal leadership but ensure a no-regrets experience for those who choose to follow.

"Too often attempts to analyse leadership tend to fail because the would-be analyst misconceives his task. He usually does not study leadership at all. Instead, he studies popularity, power, showmanship, or wisdom in long-range planning."² W. C. H. Prentice

"Leadership is an awesome responsibility. Develop these principles of leadership and you will see your effectiveness soar. God wants you to develop the potential He has given you. The extent to which your performance fails to live up to your potential is the extent to which you are failing God. The extent to which you are fulfilling your potential is the extent to which you are serving God."³ John Edmund Haggai

The call for leadership is necessary because we are experiencing a crisis of leadership in our world. This crisis of leadership trickles down from the presidency of corporations, the governments and even in the families. Dynamic leadership is highly essential for producing results in any enterprise. Acquiring and developing right and good attitudes are important for dynamic leadership.

Key Words: Leadership principles and Leadership essentials.

"The study of leadership isn't nearly as exact as, say, the study of chemistry. For one thing, the social world isn't nearly as orderly as the physical world, nor is it as susceptible to rules. For another, people unlike solids, fluids, and gases, are anything but uniform and anything but predictable. Having been a teacher and student all of my adult life, I am as leery as anyone of the idea of leaping to conclusions, or making more of evidence that is demonstrably true. So I have been forced, again and again, to qualify my answers. People wanted The Truth, and I was giving them opinions. To an extent, leadership is like beauty: it's hard to define, but you know it when you see it."⁴

Leaders who are able to express themselves fully, know what their strengths and weaknesses are, and how to fully deploy their strengths and compensate for their weaknesses. They also know what they want, why they want it, and how to communicate what they want to others, in order to gain their cooperation and support. Finally, they know how to achieve their goals. The key to full self-expression is understanding

one's self and the world, and the key to understanding is learning-from one's own life and experience. As Harlan Cleveland wrote in *The Knowledge Executive*,

"The aristocracy of achievement is numerous and pervasive... They may be leaders in politics or business or agriculture or labour or law or education or journalism or religion or affirmative action or community housing, or any policy issue from abortion to the municipal zoo.

... Their writ may run to community affairs, to national decisions or global issues, to a whole multinational industry or profession or to a narrower but deeper slice of life and work: a single firm, a local agency, or a neighbourhood."⁵

As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "The man is only half himself, the other half is his expression."⁶

The paradigm, then, is leaders, not theories about leaders, and leaders functioning in the real world, rather than in some artificial setting. The difference is crucial, for it's the difference between being driven, as too many people are today, and leading, as too few people do. Although everyone has the capacity for leadership, not everyone will become a leader especially in the confusing and often antagonistic context in which we now live. Too many people are mere products of their context, lacking the will to change, to develop their potential. However, the kind of person who is a leader is the ultimate act of free will, and if one has the will, this is the way.

"Leaders have a significant role in creating the state of mind that is the society. They can serve as symbols of the moral unity of the society. They can express the values that hold the society together. Most important, they can conceive and articulate goals that lift people out of their petty preoccupations, carry them above the conflicts that tear a society apart, and unite them in pursuit of objectives worthy of their best efforts."⁷

In November 1987, Time asked a question in a cover story, "Who's in Charge?" and answered its own question, saying, "The nation calls for leadership, and there is no one home." It is true even in today's context. Where have all the leaders gone? *Our world is littered with fallen leaders*. A few years ago a scientist at the University of Michigan listed what he considered to be the ten basic dangers to the super power societies. Here he speculated;

1. It could be the possibility of some kind of nuclear war or accident that would destroy the human race.
2. Prospect of world wide epidemic, disease, famine, or depression.
3. Lack of quality of leadership and management that could bring destruction to the society.

Our quality of life depends on the quality of our leaders. There are three basic reasons why leaders are important.

1. They are responsible for the effectiveness of organisation. The success or failure of all organisations rests on the perceived quality at the top.
2. We need anchors in our lives, a guiding purpose. Leaders fill that need.
3. The concern about the integrity of our institutions in our nations.

Sixty three years ago our leaders of Free Independence drafted the Indian Constitution, but in the present scenario we have witnessed the spurt of civil movement tired of rampant and prevalent corruption and corrupt leadership. What Happened?

"As we survey the path leadership theory has taken, we spot the wreckage of "trait theory," the "great man" theory, and the "situationist" critique, leadership styles, functional leadership, and finally, leaderless leadership, to say nothing of bureaucratic leadership, charismatic leadership, group-centred leadership, reality-centred leadership, leadership by objective, and so on. The dialectic and reversals of emphases in this area very nearly rival the tortuous twists and turns of child-rearing practices, and one can paraphrase Gertrude Stein by saying, 'a leader is a follower is a leader.'⁸

Leaders have nothing but themselves to work with. It is one of the paradoxes of life that good leaders rise to the top in spite of their weaknesses, while bad leaders rise because of their weaknesses. Abraham Lincoln was subject to fits of serious depression yet he was perhaps the best President of United States. On

the other hand, Adolf Hitler imposed his psychosis on the German people, leading them through delusions of the vilest madness and most horrific slaughter the world has ever known.

“Leadership is the discipline of deliberately exerting special influence within a group to move it toward goals of beneficial permanence that fulfil the group’s real need.”

What kind of leadership does our world need?

“Think about it: Individuals from your generation will surface as leaders in every field—business, art, politics, economics, math, technology, medicine, religion. Those men and women will shape the future during your lifetime. Nobody knows who they are. You might as well throw your hat into the ring by leveraging your gifts and opportunities for all they’re worth.”⁹

So let’s begin;

Principles of Leadership:

1. The principle of Vision:

Mahatma Gandhi had a vision of a free and independent India at a time when it was governed by the British. Henry Ford had a vision of every family in America owning its own automobile at a time when most people were frightened of the new invention. Daniel K. Ludwig had a vision for a self-supporting industrial region in the heart of the Brazilian jungle at a time when there was no industry, no electricity, and no cities of any kind for hundreds of miles. The vision of the leader is different from the vision of a scientist who works alone. The leader, however, works through other people. Having a vision alone is not enough. There must be a commitment to act on the vision. That is called a Mission. There must also be a set of specific, measurable steps to achieve the mission. Those steps are called goals. Goals design the program for achieving the mission and thus fulfilling the vision. A leader will have one vision and one mission but many goals. In 1960, President John Kennedy challenged the American people with his dream of an American on the moon by 1970. That was a vision. The president communicated his vision to the American people. The people, through the government, then committed to the fulfilment of that vision with a mission. A vision is important because it is the foundation of all true leadership. The significance of a person’s leadership depends on the “bigness” of his vision. Leadership begins with a vision. A vision is a clear picture of what the leader sees his group being or doing. The leader is wholeheartedly committed to his vision, which involves beneficial change for his group. The leader is aware of the importance of his vision and makes it the driving force behind his leadership. A vision is important because it is the foundation of all true leadership. A vision must be grasped not only by the leader, but by the followers as well.

2. The principle of Goal Setting:

“A leader must have a vision, but that vision must be fulfilled by goals that work toward the achievement of the vision. One cannot waste time with non-essentials”.¹⁰ A vision is the foundation of all leadership. The leader’s vision requires a commitment to act. That commitment is called a Mission. With a specific, measurable steps designed to achieve the mission, these steps are called goals. In the early seventies, sociologist Daniel Yankelovich said that young people were disillusioned. He said that a number of the best educated and most promising young adults had lost enthusiasm for their business careers. There was a “crisis of purpose”. For a leader to lack goals would be absurd. To be effective, a leader must constantly sharpen the focus of his vision. This happens with effective goal setting. The clearer the leader’s goals, the sharper the focus. Effective goal setting focuses the leader’s vision by spelling out what steps he will take to accomplish that vision.

Henry Kaiser said, ‘Determine what you want more than anything else in life, write down the means by which you intend to attain it, and permit nothing to deter you from pursuing it.’ Goal setting is not easy, and it takes constant review and change. A good goal setting will be S-M-A-R-T program: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Tangible.

- I. Make your goals Specific. Each goal must be specific step rather than a vague desire.

- II. Make your goals Measurable. “If you can’t measure it, you can’t monitor it.” says Paul J.Meyer of Success Motivation Institute.¹¹Goals should be measurable, not only in terms of what is accomplished but when it is accomplished. Every goal should specify when the result will be achieved.
 - III. Make your goals Attainable. Set high goals but not unattainable ones.A man with a bass voice should not expect to become a soprano soloist.An illiterate should not expect to become a famous author within a three month period. Make your goals attainable and pragmatic.
 - IV. Make your goals Realistic. State what results can be realistically achieved, given your available resources. The goal must be concrete and precise. The measures determined and taken must be realistic.
 - V. Make your goals Tangible. As you think about your goals, there will be some accomplishments that are intangible. You can achieve these intangible goals by achieving related tangible ones. The goals you set before yourself should always be tangible.
Goal setting is an on-going discipline. You cannot do it once and ignore it.Today’s persistent acceleration of change in people, places, and things demands nothing less than a clearly defined goals program.
3. **The principle of Humility:**
Despite what many think, humility gives tensile strength to leadership. Once to please a certain official, Abraham Lincoln signed an order transferring certain regiments. Secretary of War Stanton, convinced that the President had made a serious blunder, refused to execute the order. “Lincoln’s a fool. “he roared. When Lincoln heard what Stanton had said, he replied, ‘If Stanton said I am a fool, then I must be, for he is nearly always right. I’ll step over and see for myself. Lincoln quietly withdrew it.In his humility, he welcomed criticism. And he demonstrated a strength that few leaders ever match. If you hope to rise to your potential as a leader, you’ll do well to learn to meet criticism with tranquillity and pleasantness. While it is difficult for most people to display humility, it is particularly difficult for a leader because his experiences discourage humility. Humility is important for a leader because people follow more enthusiastically the leader whose motives they consider to be non-self-serving. The humble leader’s joy comes from seeing the group move toward the fulfilment of its real needs. Leadership lacking this quality, this expression of grace loses credibility.
The results of Humility are;
- Serenity: Humility fosters serenity.
 - Enlargement of Life: The person, who lacks humility and pretends to be self-sufficient, however, won’t accept any ideas; he restricts himself to his own little world. Instead of leading to the shrivelling neglect of personhood, humility opens the door to the expansion of personality and individuality. Humility results in an enlargement of life.
 - Success: Pride and prejudice prohibit enlightenment and intellectual advancement. The true scholar and the legitimate leader react like Newton, the man who discovered gravity, who said, “The great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.”The man, who knows everything, learns nothing, and so it is a humble attitude that sets the stage for the knowledge and know-how that lead to success.
4. **The principle of Communication:**
Leadership begins with a vision. The commitment to that vision is a mission, which is then fulfilled by setting and accomplishing certain goals. The leader’s task is to communicate the vision, the mission, and the goals. The leader must be a communicator.
According to Dr.John Edmund Haggai,¹² there are seven rules of effective communication which, if mastered, will help leaders maximise their effectiveness.
- I. Recognise the importance of effective communication-the leader’s task is to create understanding.

- II. Assess your audience-learn its demographic characteristics, assess its attitude towards its environment and important issues, towards each other and the very subject.
- III. Select the right communication goal-having a goal clearly in mind will conserve time, accomplish the task more effectively.
- IV. Break the preoccupation barrier-capture the audience's attention; earn the right to be heard. Identify the leading problems, promise a solution and then fulfil that promise.
- V. Refer to the known, the audience's experience-only by referring to the experiences of your audience will you develop credibility.
- VI. Support your assertions- these should be supported through restatement, exposition, cumulation, general illustration and specific instance.
- VII. Motivate action by the appeal to desire-the leader wants action. He wants to effect change. The most effective way to do that is by an appeal to dominant desire of the particular audience.
Make communication an on-going study, lifelong passion and discipline.

5. The principle of Opportunity:

In the 1970s, Lee Iacocca was the aggressive, successful president of the Ford Motor Company. He had led Ford to a \$1.8 billion profit for two years in a row; however on 13th July 1978 Henry Ford fired Lee. Less than four months later Lee became president of Chrysler, an automobile company that had just announced a third quarter loss of \$160 million, the worst deficit it had ever had. Chrysler was not managed well-each of the 31 vice-presidents was working by himself rather than working with each other. The oil shortage of 1979 compounded Chrysler's problems as the price of gasoline almost doubled and sales of large cars plummeted. But Lee Iacocca was turning his obstacles into opportunities. He had been fired. He had become president of a company most people felt would go bankrupt. But without these obstacles, Lee would never have had a chance to prove himself. In 1982, Chrysler made a modest profit. In 1983, it made the best profit in its history. Lee Iacocca became one of the most respected corporate leaders in America, and when his autobiography was published in 1984, it broke publishing sales records.¹³

"Every setback has within it the seed of an equivalent advance. You only have to look for it."¹⁴

The principle of opportunity says that life is a series of obstacles and these obstacles hold the key to your greatest opportunities if you only discipline yourself to see opportunities everywhere. None of us are perfect. We are bound to make mistakes or commit blunders either through our stupidity or ignorance or carelessness. We need to convert those mistakes or blunders into unexpected benefits.

To put the principle of opportunity into practice, Dr. John Haggai charts the essentials to how to handle mistakes, how to cope with errors, and how to profit from blunders;¹⁵

- 1) First admit the blunder the moment you know about it. One can never correct a situation if one does not admit that it exists.
- 2) Assume accountability for the blunder. Blunders are not the end of the world. No one escapes them. Infact, the people with the greatest number of achievements have frequently also scored the largest number of blunders. To correct and profit from your blunders, you must assume accountability for them.
- 3) Evaluate the damage. Will the damage resulting from this blunder be minimal or major. Think it through carefully.
- 4) Do an in-depth study of the possible causes of the blunder. Blunders could result following any one or more of the reasons. Error of judgement or poor planning or insufficient information or defective follow-up.
- 5) Immediately eliminate the causes for the blunder.
- 6) Salvage what you can. Years ago, a company overproduced hundreds of thousands of fly swatters. It could not handle the expensive inventory and storage requirements, and so it engaged one of the world's leading persuaders, Elmer Wheeler. He looked at the fly swatters, noticed that they were

square, and suggested the sales line, "These fly swatters are square so you can flies in the corners. "In a matter of few weeks all the fly swatters were sold.

- 7) Revise your modus operandi so that the blunder won't be repeated. Continually learn from the experience of others so that you won't reinvent the wheel.
- 8) Begin to execute the new program immediately. If the blunder is causing your program difficulty, procrastination will only make the situation worse. Begin your correction right away.
- 9) Use blunders as road signs. Blunders can serve as road signs that mark both where you have been in the past, as well as where you should go in the future. What you learn from the mistakes you make and the obstacles you encounter and overcome will help you to be a better leader in the future.
- 10) Remember that obstacles enhance your leadership. In overcoming obstacles, you improve your leadership capability by the credibility you develop with others who realise you have experienced what they are experiencing and to demonstrate the character of transformed leadership virtues.

As Abigail Adams wrote to her pen pal Thomas Jefferson, "These are the hard times in which a genius would wish to live.....Great necessity calls forth great leaders."¹⁶

In conclusion as Eric Hoffer¹⁷ quoted in Vanguard Management, '*In a time of drastic change, it is the learners who inherit the future. The learned find themselves equipped to live in a world that no longer exists.*

References:

- 1) Andy Stanley, The Next Generation Leader(USAMultnomah Publishers,Inc.,Sisters)
- 2) W.C.H.Prentice, "Understanding Leadership, "Harvard Business Review, Number 61511,September-October,1961,quoted in Paths Toward Personal Progress: Leaders Are Made, Not Born(Boston: Harvard Business Review,1980)
- 3) John Edmund Haggai, Lead On (Singapore,BAC Printers1986)
- 4) Warren Bennis, OnBecoming A Leader (Mumbai,India:Magna Publishing Co.Ltd.)
- 5) Harland Cleveland, The Knowledge Executive,E.P.Dutton(1985).
- 6) Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Poet, "Essays:Second Series(1844).
- 7) John W. Gardner, "Leadership Parers, "Leadership Studies Program, Independent Sector (1987).
- 8) Administrative Science Quarterly as quoted by Warren Bennis, On Becoming A Leader (Mumbai, India: Magna Publishing Co. Ltd.) page 39.
- 9) Stanley,Next,12.
- 10) Haggai,Lead,26.
- 11) Meyer,Paul J.Dynamics of Goal setting.Waco,Texas:Success Motivation Institute,1977.
- 12) Haggai,Lead,85.
- 13) Iacocca,Lee.Iacocca,An autobiography.New York:Bantam Books,1984.
- 14) Haggai,Lead,124
- 15) Haggai,Lead,125.
- 16) Bennis,Becoming,189
- 17) Bennis,Becoming,189.
