

Leadership Competencies

What is Leadership?

We are often asked this question, and it surprises us that many companies have promoted non-leaders into leadership positions. This is a shame and, if not remedied, is a huge form of disrespect to the leader and his/her team. So, what is Leadership? We will first answer the question, "What is NOT Leadership?" based on John Maxwell's book, "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership."

Leadership is NOT being a manager. Leading and managing is not one and the same. Cost and time are managed; people are led. The comparative list below illustrates the difference between leadership and management:

Management (Vital)

Do Things Right
Urgency
Speed
Bottom Line (Egg)
Efficiency
Methods
Practices
Work IN the System
Climb the Ladder Quickly

Leadership (Vital)

Do the Right Things
Importance
Direction
Top Line (Goose)
Effectiveness
Purpose
Principles
Work ON the System
Is the Ladder Leaning Against the Right Wall?

Leadership is NOT being an entrepreneur. There is a large misperception that all salespeople and entrepreneurs are leaders.

Leadership is NOT being knowledgeable. Knowledge and intelligence can take you places, but it will NOT make you a leader.

Leadership is NOT being a pioneer. Just because somebody is out in front of a crowd doesn't mean they are a leader. To be a leader, one must be out in front AND have people intentionally following their lead and acting on the vision.

Leadership is NOT having the top position. The number one leadership myth is that leadership is based on position. There are lots of people in leadership positions that are NOT leaders. As mentioned above, this is a huge disrespect to them and the people that report to them.



Leadership is Influence. No more; no less.

BAD NEWS!

Your influence today is dictated by your performance (the example you have set) up to this point. If you think people aren't watching and don't care or even know the example you set, you are sorely mistaken. People in positions of authority are always living in the fishbowl. If you have not turned positional authority into leadership influence, you have a lot of work ahead of you! If you don't apply the leadership principles, you will not have influence and you will NOT be followed. If you are in a leadership position, that makes you ineffective.

GOOD NEWS!

Leadership can be learned. Once one learns the principles, they must practice them and apply them to their life. Apply these principles and people WILL follow them.

“Don't judge a man by where he is, but by what he had to overcome to get where he is.” - Booker T. Washington

John Maxwell, in his book “21 Laws of Leadership” gives us the Law of the Lid. He explains the law as follows:

“Leadership ability is the lid that determines a person's level of effectiveness. The lower an individual's ability to lead, the lower the lid on his potential. The higher the individual's ability to lead, the higher the lid on his potential. To give you an example, if your leadership rates an 8, then your effectiveness can never be greater than a 7. If your leadership is only a 4, then your effectiveness will be no higher than a 3. Your leadership ability—for better or for worse—always determines your effectiveness and the potential impact of your organization”

In the cases where you have a level 8 leader working for a level 4 leader, you are at risk of losing the level 8 leader. Often times, the level 8 will stay and simply ignore the guidance of the level 4 leader, which leads to autonomy in the business if not dealt with. Growing one's leadership is a process. If one continually invests in their leadership, the inevitable result is growth over time. Leadership is developed daily; not in a day.

“The secret of our success is found in our daily agenda.” - Tag Short



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While there is no one set of competencies that anyone can point to for leadership, we do believe the following are a solid core set for what should be expected of a leader that is considered effective. The list is short and concise as to make it easy for leaders to recall and use in their discussions with their teams.

- **Set Direction** – Create a compelling vision that is understood and shared by all. If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there. Ensure the team knows where they are going. Don't leave this up to chance.
- **Initiate Action** – If it is to be, it is up to me. Make it Happen! Don't let excuses get in the way of progress. Those that say things can't be done should get out of the way of those doing it. Be a doer! Set the tone for the "Do Crew."
- **Organize Systems** - Ensure that solutions interface with other countermeasures into a holistic system that does not require a hero to sustain it. Running the system should be boring; improving the system should be the fun part.
- **Model Behavior** - Never be out-worked, out-hustled, or out-cared; EVER! Ensure you "get it" and "show it" at all times. Consistency is the KEY! Hustle doesn't mean being a workaholic. It means being very efficient and engaged in what you are doing. You would be mentally and physically tired each day when you leave your job. Mentally tired, because you have been mentally engaged with your team, and physically tired, because you have been on the 'beat' all day. "Leave it all on the field."
- **Constantly Learn** - Ensure that you never stagnate. Every day should be a growing experience for us all. We owe it to our people to be on the cutting edge. Ray Kroc once stated, "If you aren't green and growing, you are ripe and rotting." We couldn't agree more.
- **Enable Effectiveness** - Make it easy for people to do the right thing. Give people what they need to be successful. Practice "Line Back" by providing support and taking away waste. Ensure others are doing the same.

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Does your leadership team exhibit the leadership competencies? Is your performance appraisal process aligned with these competencies? If not, we can help. We have years of experience in developing HR systems to support the development needs of companies across many industries. We also offer team, practitioner and executive coaching, as well as a 200% risk-free guarantee on implementation work. For a no-obligation introduction meeting, please contact Paul Eakle at paul.eakle@driveinc.com or 865-323-3491.

