

## THE ESSENCE OF LEADERSHIP

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**Summary.** *Leadership is a lot more complicated than it seems. It is not only about leading people, giving advice and taking responsibility for every member of your team. Leadership involves more things like passion, determination, hard-work, respect, focus, confidence and a bit of luck. All of these are the key to becoming a good leader. When you think that you've got them all, there's always something else that you've missed that is as important as everything else, so you should never think that you've got to the top. There is always someplace higher than yours. Therefore, you should always aim higher and never stop on what you've achieved.*

**Key-words:** *communication, people, success, purpose, hard-work, future.*

### Introduction

Nowadays, the position of a leader is underestimated. People say and think that the leader is the one with fewer responsibilities and chores but with bigger wage. Well, it is not exactly how it works. A leader is a very strong and confident person who doesn't give up after his or her first failure but gets up on his feet and works even harder. "Stay confident even when something bad happens. It is just a bump in the road. It will pass" [1]. These are the words of a man who has achieved a lot by his principle of "think big" both in life and in business. This man is Donald J. Trump and is considered to be the very definition of the American success story. He is the developer of some of the planet's most prestigious real estate, he's been on the bottom and risen to become one of the world's wealthiest men. Therefore, he is a good example of a great leader as he has had a long road till his success and he managed to not only lead people but also teach them some important tips in business like "When someone attacks you publicly, always strike back" [2]. As it is primordial for a public person to keep his face and reputation clean because his work depends mostly on it. First, people are attracted to the face of the company or person, and only after that, they are immersed in its work. That is what we learn from business people who decide to share their path with us, ordinary people or people who are just at the beginning of their own road. Without a doubt, leadership is also about learning. As John F. Kennedy has stated: "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other" [3]. As a leader, you both learn and teach because there are always people who have something to share with you and those who have something to take from you. Clearly, there is more about leadership and its essence for everyone apart, but in general, is an amazing opportunity for a person to take from life everything he or she can and allow him or her to pass it on to others. What it takes to be a leader.

**"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." [4] -John Quincy Adams**

A leader is a lot of things, and one of them is inspiration and passion. When a person is passionate about his work, it is seen in his eyes and in his actions. He wants to work more and more not for the money but for the pleasure. Such a leader inspires his teammates to work as much as he does and to dedicate themselves fully to the work they do because they see how passionate is their leader, and they tend to achieve the same or at least similar level of satisfaction from what they do. "Be passionate about your work" [1]. That is another tip I've learned from the Donald J. Trump's book "Think Big". In work, passion is one of the key ingredients to a perfect done job. You have to love what you do. Have you ever seen, met or heard of a leader who hated his work?

Who didn't love what he dedicated his whole life to? We guess not. Because a good leader is always someone dedicated fully to what to do and teaches others to do the same.

Another thing that makes a good leader is determination. Like, how it is said, when life gives you, lemons make some lemonade. On the road to success each person encounters a lot of downfalls, but only the strong ones go on after each setback and become even stronger. That is why, not all of those who started that road had come to the end of it, some have given up in the middle of it. "Focus on the top, and you will get there" [1]. A person who doesn't have a purpose can easily be lost. Though, those who aim higher go further. There is nothing bad in thinking big and setting yourself high goals. That way you only work harder and become more perseverant and determined in achieving your goals. "The pessimist complains about the wind. The optimist expects it to change. The leader adjusts the sails" [3].

It is much easier to blame the bad weather, the traffic, the paper, the pen or the surrounding people rather than accept that it is your fault and try to fix it yourself. A good leader accepts his mistakes, learns from them and comes up with solutions. "The key to mistake is not letting the mistake bring you down" [1]. Another important tip learned from the book. Mistakes are inevitable. Nobody is perfect. We just have to learn from our and others mistakes and do not think too much on them. Everything that has already happened is in the past and cannot be changed. All that we can do is deal with consequences and try to fix it. "Time is on your side; things do not continue downward forever." [4] Even when you feel like everything around you is against you, you have to remember that this is temporary. Every leader has gone through a black streak of life. Those who gave up during the darkest times has become no one today. Whereas, those who looked into the brighter future and knew that everything is temporary and has an end, are now at the top. "Acknowledge your problems, but focus on what feels good" [1]. That is what everyone should do in your darkest times. Never forget about the light. A good leader never ignores the problems, he sees them, he understands them and puts them aside while thinking of a solution under the light of the bright future.

"The true mark of a leader is the willingness to stick with a bold course of action - an unconventional business strategy, a unique product-development roadmap, a controversial marketing campaign — even as the rest of the world wonders why you're not marching in step with the status quo. In other words, real leaders are happy to zig while others zag. They understand that in an era of hyper-competition and non-stop disruption, the only way to stand out from the crowd is to stand for something special" [3]. Says Bill Taylor, from the article "Do You Pass the Leadership Test?" A true leader always comes with innovative ideas and plans. You can never get on top while stealing other people's ideas or paraphrasing those that have already been said. There are a million things on earth that could be used for the first time if to look from a different perspective. We all are different; we think differently and have different ideas. If you know how to sustain your idea, no matter how crazy it seems, then you can make it your own business plan or even a platform. With the right people aside and enough materials everything can be turned into a success.

### **The job of a leader**

A leader is a multitasking job that requires concentration and attention. But above all of that stands the most important key for a good leader – communication. As we all know, the key to success is communication. The way we talk to others, how we tell the information and our ability to keep the conversation going are the factors that help us achieve the greatest results. You should never take no for an answer. Along the way you will meet a lot of people who will not take you or your offer seriously, especially at the beginning of your path. That is why communication is so important among leaders. Whenever you face a 'no' you should always find words to turn it into a 'but' then 'maybe' and finally into a strong 'yes'.

“The future of leadership lies in information, communication, knowledge and people. These are the prime intellectual components which will become more important to measure the value of leadership in businesses, organizations and political environments” [2]. As stated earlier, leadership consists of information gained from experience and studies, communication and the level of it, the knowledge of your job and the field you are in, and people that are aside you, and those who pass by throughout your lifetime. Leadership is something that some people are born with and others gain through their lives. Some people even blame luck for that. Like, successful people are only successful because they were lucky. But that is not true. Success consists of 5 % good luck and 95 % hard-work. “The harder you work, the luckier you get” [1]. And that is a fact. Undoubtedly, luck is important too, it gets you further and in an easier way. But who likes to get everything on an easy way? Only lazy people who are satisfied with what they get and don’t dream big. Unlike those who always go big and never stop on what they’ve achieved so far. For instance, you could be lucky to be born in a wealthy family with a big business to inherit and everything served on a silver plate for you, but is that really your roof? Is it really all you can get from life? Through hard-work and perseverance you can get higher than ever, you can achieve more than anyone could imagine. Everything is in your hands, and a good leader knows it.

Leadership is all about never stopping at your laurels and always aiming higher. Also, it is about focusing on results, therefore coming up with convenient solutions. Along with leading people cleverly and thoughtfully while not forgetting about a concrete strategy which you follow all along. The fundamentals of leadership are basically all the same, even throughout time. As it has been stated in research from Harvard Business Review: “We interviewed over forty successful leaders from a variety of organizations (corporate, non-profit, startup), across different industries. We reviewed several decades’ worth of articles from the Harvard Business Review to understand the recurring messages from academics and practitioners about what leaders should do. Our conclusion from this research, and from our own years of experience as leadership and organizational advisors, was that the best leaders with the most outside impact almost always deploy these six classics, fundamental practices:

1. uniting people around an exciting, aspirational vision;
2. building a strategy for achieving the vision by making choices about what to do and what not to do;
3. attracting and developing the best possible talent to implement the strategy;
4. relentlessly focusing on results in the context of the strategy;
5. creating ongoing innovation that will help reinvent the vision and strategy; and
6. “leading yourself”: knowing and growing yourself so that you can most effectively lead others and carry out these practices” [4].

In summary, the fundamentals of leadership are always important and known of, but with the world changing, everything is changing and so is the basis of everything. Nowadays, the point is more on the effectiveness of the leader in leading his or her group of people along with keeping up with the newest trends in the meantime. Though, people are changing and sooner or later we might all be replaced by AI and computers.

### **Conclusions**

To conclude, leadership is a lot of things, and it is a lot harder to understand than one could think. Many people have various opinions regarding what a great leader is composed of, how he should behave and what he should look like. Truth be told, leadership is not only about business, it is also about personal life too. Each person should be the leader in his own life. Each of us has the needed qualities and abilities to lead at least one person, and that is ourselves. We all should be hard-working, focused on higher goals, responsible for the choices we make, learning from our own mistakes and from others, devoted to our passion and never let that fade and always be an inspiration to others, and more importantly to ourselves. That is what the essence of leadership is. To know how to be a leader in your own life and only then to be a leader in others’ lives.

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