

CHALLENGE

A Herff Jones IMPACT Resource For Students

October, 2004

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Leadership Styles

HAZARDS OF LEADERSHIP

When things are going right and your group is accomplishing it's goals, being a leader can be a rewarding and educational experience. But there can be drawbacks to being the designated leader in any group. You might:

1. Come to love the power of being in charge and become a totally autocratic leader who misuses the position.
2. Become carried away with your own importance and lose sight of the group's goals. Egotism can overtake everyone from time to time.
3. Fail to listen to the advice of others who have experience.
4. Get into trouble by trying too hard and taking on too much responsibility. You will spread yourself too thin if you fail to delegate. You will get frustrated at your lack of success at any individual task.
5. Failure to organize. If you are not organized you will spend more time than necessary to accomplish less than your potential. You may not be successful if you "wing it".

6. Become frustrated and disappointed with others in the group. Not all group members will respond to the same motivating techniques or work as hard as you wish them to work.

All of this means that it is not enough to know which kind of leadership style you wish to develop. An effective leader must have command of a broad range of skills in order to bring the group to the successful completion of its goals. So as a leader, always keep an open mind and be willing to learn new leadership techniques and styles. **Remember leadership is performance, not position.**

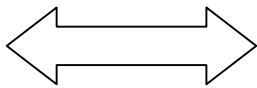


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TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL LEADERS

1. Match the task to the capabilities of the person. Everyone has particular interests and skills that are appropriate to certain activities. An artist might be most effective on the decorations committee where he or she can make use of their talent rather than on the planning committee.
2. Involve different people. It may seem easier to keep calling on people who have been helpful in the past or always turn to your close friends, but everyone has something that they can contribute. Part of the responsibility of being a good leader is to involve as many people as possible in a project.
3. Do not dictate but delegate. Discuss the goals of the task, define the operational boundaries and be willing to let him or her make decisions necessary to complete the task. If specific steps must be followed, be sure to communicate them clearly. Make sure that they are understood and agreement is reached.

4. Monitor the progress. Although you have delegated the task to someone else, as the leader you are ultimately responsible for its successful completion. Set a timeline by which certain parts of a task need to be completed.
5. Consider alternative plans and persons. If a task is not being completed according to the established guidelines, re-evaluate the task and possibly delegate its responsibility to different group members and/or provide help to the original person or committee.
6. Evaluate the task. An evaluation of the way the task was accomplished is helpful not only to determine its success, but as a resource for those who may undertake a similar project.
7. Express appreciation. Do not forget to thank everyone who has contributed to making the project a success. Everyone appreciates encouragement and a friendly thank you.



A conscientious leader works to become a better leader, minute by minute. Leaders must understand the people that they are trying to lead.

A little advice:

- ⇒ **Good leaders are good listeners.**
- ⇒ **Good leaders must know themselves and understand why people act in a certain way.**

- ⇒ **Good leaders must do what they say they will do.**
- ⇒ **Good leaders listen to the suggestions of others.**
- ⇒ **Good leaders are courteous, polite, and tactful.**
- ⇒ **Good leaders are patient with others.**
- ⇒ **Good leaders are cheerful.**
- ⇒ **Good leaders avoid favoritism.**
- ⇒ **Good leaders make a significant contribution to every task.**
- ⇒ **Good leaders associate with other leaders to learn from them.**
- ⇒ **Good leaders show care and compassion.**

Many people confuse leadership with power. Great leaders have a certain amount of authority. The best leaders, however, rarely exercise their power and authority over others. They serve the people that they are leading. Great leaders know that one of the secrets of leadership is to empower the people they are leading.

Leaders have vision. To lead, one must have a dream that people want to share and are willing to work together to make the dream a reality. People without vision cannot inspire others.

Leaders are innovative. Organizations need to develop new leaders who bring fresh ideas.

Leaders must be able to communicate. New ideas are of little value if they are not communicated to the people who need to implement them.

Good leaders have a desire to compete and win. They are ready to “go for the gold”. Leaders are never satisfied with almost or second place.

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“Make it a point to do something every day that you don’t want to do. This is the golden rule for acquiring the habit of doing your duty without pain.”
Mark Twain

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