

LEADERSHIP and PRINCIPLES

Qemeru Dessalegn

when we think of a leader, we think of someone who is in charge or someone with authority. To be an effective leader, one must possess certain traits, abide by certain principles, and have an appropriate style. Being an effective leader requires more than possessing certain traits, you must also follow principles, which are basic tools of a successful leader. Use them to evaluate yourself, then to develop a plan to improve your ability to lead.

Leadership is the process of influencing others to accomplish a mission. The leadership skills that you use to accomplish a mission are the same whether you are in a classroom, your neighborhood, church, home or organization. To be a good leader, you must provide teammates with purpose, direction and motivation. Purpose helps them to understand why they are performing a project; direction shows what they must do; and motivation gives them the desire or initiative to do everything they are capable of doing to accomplish their mission.

There are 11 principles of leadership. A knowledge of these principles , and of basic human nature, will help to be an effective leader in any situation.

THE PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP:

1- know yourself and seek self- improvement; To know yourself, you must understand who you are. Where do your interests lie ? Do you have a special talent? weaknesses ? strength ? etc. these questions is part of **Self-evaluation**. Through the process of self-evaluation, leaders determine their capabilities and limitations.

- Develop a genuine interest in people; acquire the "human touch".
- develop a philosophy of life and work.
- Ask for honesty opinions from your team members and instructors as to how you can improve you leadership ability.

2- be technically proficient. Technical competence requires a leader to be able to perform all tasks associated with the job or assignment as well as to train team members to do their jobs.

- seek a well - rounded education. independent reading, research and study.
- seek out and foster associations with capable leaders or mentors. observe and study their actions, know your history very well and take examples.
- learn and apply sound leadership and management techniques.

- Familiarize yourself with the capabilities and limitations of all elements of your authority.

3- seek responsibility & take responsibility for your action. leading always involves responsibility. Accepting responsibility for all that a group does or fails to do is part of a leader's job.

- Adhere to what you think is right; have the courage of your convictions..
- Seek diversified leadership positions that will give experience in accepting responsibility.
- Accept criticism. Admit mistakes when you make them and take corrective action; avoid evading responsibility by placing the blame on someone else.
- Possess the competence necessary to make sound and timely decisions.
- Perform every act, large or small, to the best of your ability.

4- make sound & timely decision. Leaders must be able to reason under the most critical conditions and decide quickly what action to take. If delay or avoid making decision, their indecisiveness may create hesitancy, loss of confidence, and confusion within the group and that may cause the project to fail. Leaders must be able to react promptly to each situation.

- consider the effects of your decisions.
- Ensure that team members are familiar with your policies and plans.
- Encourage team members to participate in planning process.

5- Set the example. leader must be a good example. This is a heavy responsibility, but as a leader, have no choice. (honor, loyalty ,integrity, respect... etc). from followers you must demonstrate them.

- Master your emotions, control burst of anger or depression.
- Maintain an optimistic outlook and a will to succeed.
- Conduct yourself so that your personal habits are not open to **censure**.
- Avoid being partial to any followers

6- Know your personnel and look out for their welfare. Leader must know and understand the members of their unit. As a leader, need to understand them as individuals - their interest, values, and attitudes. leader must know why they act the way they do. Commit time and effort to listen to and learn about them.

- Administer discipline timely, fairly, and impartially; ensure fair and equitable distribution of awards.
- Encourage individual development.
- Develop a knowledge and understanding of your followers, see and be seen; be available; friendly and approachable.
- Concern yourself with what makes your teammates "tick".

7- Keep your followers informed. We live in a society where mass media constantly keeps us informed of what goes on around us.

- Use the chain of command. be alert to detect the spread of rumors.
- Build moral by informing team members of their successes; be quick to recognize their accomplishments. Keep your team informed about current rules and regulations.

- Give advice and assistance freely when your followers request it.

8- Developed a sense of responsibility in your followers. As a leader, you are a teacher and are responsible for developing your followers. Help them meet their potential by giving them challenges and opportunities that you feel they can handle. Encourage them to take the initiative and work forward completing a task.

9- Ensure each task is understood, supervised and accomplished. Apply this principle using these techniques.

- Ensure the need for an order exist.
- Encourage followers to seek immediate clarification of any misunderstanding as to the task you want them to accomplish; question them to determine if, doubt and misunderstanding.
- Correct errors in such a way as to encourage and avoid public criticism. Exercise care and thought in the supervision of your orders.

10- Build a team. A leader must develop a team spirit that motivates members to work confidently. Since task accomplishment is based on teamwork, the better the team will perform the task. In addition, members of a group will perform better if they have a sense of belonging and team spirit. All team members must understand that their contribution to the unit is important and recognized; as a whole gives its members a feeling of accomplishment, security and recognition. Your teammates need confidence in your abilities to lead them and in their abilities to perform as members of the team. Your group becomes a team only when the members can trust and respect you and each other as trained professionals. Develop mutual trust and understanding.

11- Employ your team in accordance with its capabilities.

- Keep yourself informed as to the effectiveness of your team.
- ensure that the tasks you assign to subordinates are reasonable.
- make decisions based on sound leadership principles.

These 11 principles will help you as a leader to accomplish tasks and to care for your team. Think of them as a guide for leadership action.

For leadership to be effective, all leaders must learn, understand, and apply sound techniques. Among these techniques, leaders must have a thorough understanding of how to apply the **BE, KNOW, DO** attributes to real life situations. Regardless of the circumstances of the situation, leaders must concentrate on **what they are** that is their beliefs and character, **what they know** that is human nature and their job, and **what they do**; that provide purpose, direction and motivation.

The education of leader is continuous, building on the past experiences and training. the traits and principles of leadership as well as the BE, KNOW, DO attributes provide a framework for the development and self-evaluation of a leader. Use them in conjunction with other leadership techniques to access yourself and to develop a plan of action to add to your leadership skills and abilities.

As a leader, you are responsible for making decisions, but do not decide on a course of action without thinking over the consequences - the choice you make should be based on your values. Then apply these values to every leadership situation in order to build the trust and confidence of your followers. Finally, beware of temptations and pressures that can affect a leadership situation. Remember, anyone can make a decision, but effective leaders base their decisions on the highest moral good. Let your personal and professional codes of ethics guide you to do what is morally right.