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**What Does It Take To Be A True Leader?**

**By Amy Potavin**

What is leadership? The dictionary defines leadership as, "a person who by force of example,

talents, or qualities plays a directing role, wields commanding influence, or has a following in any sphere of activity or thought." Neale Donald Walsch writes that, "A true leader is not the one with the most followers, but one who creates the most leaders."

Jack Welch defines a leader as someone who knows that "before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others." I personally believe the truest and best leaders were those who lead from the heart and who followed their own values. Leaders like Abraham Lincoln and Jesse Jackson. Leaders like Andrew Carnegie and even Bill Gates. They had a vision and were unafraid to follow that vision in accordance with their own spiritual, moral, and personal beliefs, despite intense opposition, rejection, failure, and even personal hardship.

I believe a true leader is one who maintains an uncompromising adherence to an internalized, but otherwise generally accepted code of moral values; who adheres to utter sincerity, honesty, and candor in all communication; and who avoids deception, expediency, artificiality, or shallowness of any kind in all situations. Quite a tough ideal to live up to, I know. Then again, when you look around, how many TRUE LEADERS exist in today's world?

So what does it take to be a leader? Here are ten qualities of today's most successful leaders.

1. True leaders know who they are. They know their strengths so that they can maximize them, and they know their weaknesses so that they can surround themselves with colleagues that compensate for them.

2. True leaders are genuine. They do not use false facades or "poker faces." Instead, they say what they mean and mean what they say. They are aware of their own inner voices and selves, and strive to know themselves better everyday.

3. True leaders are responsible. They take total responsibility for themselves and for their behavior. They take responsibility for the results and consequences of their behavior. More than that, true

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leaders even take responsibility for their subordinates or others for which they feel accountable.

4. True leaders have integrity. They understand that the **ONLY** viable, marketable quality in today's global economy is **CHARACTER**. Merriam–Webster defines character as, "a composite of good moral qualities typically of moral excellence and firmness blended with resolution, self–discipline, high ethics, force, and judgment." Every society and every culture values these qualities, which are core to a leader's integrity.

5. True leaders are caring. They know that their "purpose" as a leader is to **SERVE** those that they lead. Therefore, they have genuine concern for the people they lead. They never belittle or humiliate others; and they do not discount the opinions of others, even when they disagree with them.

6. True leaders have a vision. They translate the here and now, the immediate moment, into their vision of the future. They focus on the big picture and can describe that picture to their colleagues,

subordinates, business partners, and customers. They understand the long–term effects of the tasks that need to be completed today, the desired outcomes of those tasks, and how to communicate the immediate needs of the business in terms of their future vision.

7. True leaders are open to change. They listen without ego or prejudice; and they know that **THEIR** idea does not need to be, and may not be, the **RIGHT** idea. They realize that new ideas and new perceptions are key to progress and improvement. This key trait keeps them, and their businesses, flexible, responsive, and innovative in today's ever–changing business environment.

8. True leaders value the contributions of others. Leaders understand the value of teamwork and the synergy created through the combined efforts of several talented individuals. They understand that their colleagues and subordinates must be valued, and they are secure enough in their own right to allow others the opportunity to contribute. More importantly, true leaders recognize that their contributions may not always be the best contributions!

9. True leaders are courageous! They understand that doing the **RIGHT** thing is oftentimes not the **EASY** thing. They are prepared to fight for their beliefs. They are not swayed by the judgements and arguments of others, merely to avoid conflict or confrontation; particularly when those judgements or arguments do not serve the greater good. Most importantly, true leaders will do what is right **EVEN** if it causes personal hardship!

10. True leaders create leaders! The best leaders treat each individual as unique. They teach, coach, advise, and even assist people who need it. They understand that the more they facilitate the improvement and advancement of others, the more they are fulfilled themselves and the better they and their business become.

Beyond this, true leaders are authentic. Nobody is perfect, and it is unlikely (if not impossible) that today's leaders have **EACH** and **EVERYONE** one of these traits. But go back to the first of these traits. True leaders **KNOW WHO THEY ARE**. They are honest with those around them, and more importantly, they are **HONEST WITH THEMSELVES**.

## What Does It Take To Be A True Leader?

So, what does it take to be a leader? It takes the COURAGE to look at yourself in the mirror and truly see what qualities you have and what qualities YOU DO NOT HAVE! It means taking that inventory, acknowledging what you may need to work on, and then making the commitment to do the work!

So, what do you say? Do you have what it takes to be a true leader?

Ms. Potavin's business is to provide the means that allows you to discover, unlock and harness your hidden talents, inspiring you to live fully AND purposefully; to acknowledge your achievements and accept your downfalls; and allow yourself the opportunity to BELIEVE in your abilities and SUCCEED in your professional and personal life. See Amy's profile at

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, or

visit her at

<http://www.believe-network.com>

### **Are you a Leader?**

**By Mike Harrod**

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When you look at yourself in the mirror do you see a leader?

A leader is not someone that is has a large organization and is setting on the sideline reaping the benefits from it.

That kind of leader will dwindle away.

The kind of leader that I am talking about is in the trenches with their downline everyday. They would never ask anything from their group that they wouldn't go and do themselves.

You might say that is great I can do that it is all a mindset.

**WRONG!!**

Leadership is difficult and it takes a lot of work.

This means answering questions daily to any downline or prospects through email or phone.

In order to do this a leader needs to know what is going on. They need to understand how the company they are working with works. How the compensation plan works, how the company does

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business in general.

Your group depends on you to give them these answers when they need them.

This means calling your go getters to make sure that they don't need anything. This is important because I have found that someone may be having problems and are too scared to call me to ask for help. I don't mind calling them just to make sure.

Leadership means you no longer work for yourself at your business you work for your group or downline.

You are at their beckon call all the time and that is what makes you a leader.

You may say that you are not ready to be a leader. That is perfectly fine and let me share a small secret with you. If you plan on being a leader in the future you must first learn to follow.

The greatest leaders were at first the greatest followers.

So if you are ready to rise to the top and strive to be a leader pick someone that is successful and you trust and admire and start following. You will be there before you know it.

It almost sounds like being a leader may not be all it is cracked up to be, but let me tell you that the

benefits far outweigh the sacrifices that you will have to make for your group.

This is just another way to make sure that once you find that perfect marketing plan that is bringing you great results you can hold on to those results and build an unstoppable downline.

Why will it be unstoppable?

Because without you even knowing it you are building leaders in your group just because of your actions. They may be following you now, but they will break away one of these days to be the leader of their

own group and you can look back and realize that it is from them following you that they were able to lead the way they are today.

Mike Harrod is the author of the newsletter "21st Century Marketing Pros" If you would like to find out how to get a free subscription to his weekly newsletter visit his website at:

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