



# Leadership Foundations

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There are certain attributes of leadership that determine success. Violate or ignore them is perilous. The effectiveness of a leader is based on the application of a few key principles, not often found through academic pursuit but from experience. Once learned and applied, these principles often contribute generously to the success of the leader, their teams, projects, markets, and products.

## Getting People to Do What is Needed.

- Leadership is based upon one thing. Influence.
- Real leadership is not appointed, awarded, or assigned. It is earned every single day.
- Leadership is about creating influence to get people to follow. Whereas, management is about maintaining focus on processes and systems.
- Leaders influence and create positive change. Managers maintain already determined direction and pace, but rarely influence change. To move people, organizations, markets, customers, and companies influence is at the center of leadership effectiveness.
- Every leader earns the right to lead and have influence based upon hard work and results. People won't follow those that aren't 'in the game' working hard and achieving positive outcomes.
- If you don't have influence over people, or if they won't follow you, you're not a leader. You will need to discover the skills, actions, and results that create positive change in yourself, your people, and environment.
- Leadership contains many attributes such as emotional intelligence, respect, experience, strength, people skills, discipline, vision, understanding of timing, communication, acceleration of momentum, among many others.
- Leaders maintain and encourage the behavior of curiosity - of being a lifelong learner. They constantly are looking for new, innovative, and proven ways to lead through the reading of books, attending seminars, and through relationships with other leaders.
- Leadership is developed over years, every single day. Leadership is not the result of one event.

Leadership is about influencing others.

Leadership is about creating positive change.

Leadership is learned and exhibited across a lifetime of achievement and success.

Leadership is not easy or fast.

## Leadership Series.

The Afterburner Group recognizes the need for quick, actionable information regarding leadership in marketing, sales, customers, and products. As such, we have put together a series of papers for use within your project, organization, or company.

Lead like never before.™



## Leadership Foundations (con't)

- Champions are only recognized as such in the ring. They become champions through strategy, skill, training, work, and focus on a recognized goal or opponent.
- Be prepared. People have trust and confidence in those that are well prepared and ready to meet the challenges as arise.
- Leaders focus on relationships. People follow, not machinery, buildings, trucks, or products. Leaders recognize and proactively create and maintain relationships at all levels.
- Leaders listen as much as they speak. Leaders understand that they need to have clear understanding of their environment to be as effective as possible.
- Effective communication is a cornerstone of leadership. People listen to words and observe actions. Leaders pay attention to the three legs of communication: content, style/media, and timing.

## Building Respect and Trust.

- Trust is foundational to leadership effectiveness. Nobody follows a 'leader' that they can't trust.
- Trust is built through action, not words. It is built through achievement, through integrity, and in a way that demonstrates regard for people and their success.
- Respect is built on making good, sound decisions. It is also built on being able to admit mistakes and placing what is in the best interests of their people ahead of their own personal need or agenda.
- People are attracted to those who are better leaders than themselves. They want to learn, grow, and become more effective. This behavior demonstrated respect.

## Credibility and Integrity.

- Credibility is the definition of leadership. Earned over the long-haul, but easily lost, credibility is the test that people put leaders through. If the leader is credible, they will listen and follow. If the leader is not, they will turn their attention, energy, and productivity elsewhere.
- Leaders must build professional, and personal credibility every day. An individual with no credibility is not a leader.
- Do what you say you're going to do and do it. Don't change the rules half-way through. Don't make excuses. Leaders are masters of delivering results to properly set expectations - they are people of integrity.
- Leaders can be counted on. They are predictable and dependable in their actions, their word, and in their results. People can rely upon leaders at all times.



## Leadership Foundations (con't)

### Enhancing Leadership Emotional Intelligence (EI).

- Emotional intelligence is the inherent ability to cut through the fog, to see the issues as they really are, to understand interpersonal dynamics, and to be willing to make the tough, correct decisions.
- The more emotional intelligence a person has, the more effectively they recognize leadership, or lack, in others.
- A leader's emotional intelligence is a significant factor that separates great leaders from good leaders.
- A leader with high emotional intelligence can quickly assess situations and instinctively know what action to take. They see things with a 'leadership bias' and intuitively know what to do.
- Leaders with a high EI understand the intangible factors, prevalent in all situations, and how to work with them to accomplish desired goals.
- Developing a high EI brings speed and accuracy to leadership issues.

### Connecting with People.

- Values connect people to people. Individuals are attracted to people who share similar values as their own.
- The best way to connect and improve people is to improve your capabilities and skills. As the leader does this, they become more attractive to other people.
- The strength of the leader/follower relationship the more likely the follower will want to help the leader.
- Leaders are initiators. Leaders don't wait for people or circumstances to come to them.
- Build relationships with people before you ask them to follow. Doing the reverse increases time and effort.
- Leaders look for and hire the best people for the job. Then they delegate as much as they can. People want to know they are important and capable in accomplishing the task at hand.
- Leaders that can't empower others create barriers that demotivate, cut productivity, and increase cost.
- People can't give what they don't have. Followers can't build leaders.
- The most effective leaders understand the value of developing other leaders. They know that with more leaders, success is increased.
- People follow leaders that have a worthy cause. People generally don't follow worthy causes with poor leadership.



## Leadership Foundations (con't)

- Leadership success is gauged by the leader's ability to take people where they need to go. Leaders can only do this if the people allow them to lead.
- Leaders give credit where credit is due. Leaders celebrate victory and applaud the success of others over their personal need.
- Leaders know that teams succeed when there is a unified, clear vision - irrespective of how talented the people are.
- Leaders know that momentum is a strong ally. Momentum can often be the difference between winning and losing. Momentum accelerates success. Momentum changes people's perspectives of leadership.

## Setting and Keeping Priorities.

- Any list of priorities for a leader must begin with what is required of the leader. Anything that is not necessary for the leader to do personally must be eliminated from the list.
- Leaders need to spend 80% of their time where they have strength. Where there is the greatest ROI on time and energy spent. Delegate the rest.
- When taking on new responsibilities, re-assess existing priorities and validate, reorder, or change them, quickly.
- Focus on those things that have the highest probability of reward or success. Leaders proactively seek ways to increase focus and decrease number of actions.
- Leaders think of what is best for the team. Their personal agenda takes a back seat. Always.
- Leaders develop people to be leaders. Additional leaders always bring new followers. The team grows in vision, skill, capability, bandwidth, and delivery of results to the goals.
- Leaders are laser-like in their attention to: personal strengths, developing the top 20%, giving away power, investing time and energy into others, and helping people achieve more than they ever thought possible.