

LEADERSHIP UNDER FIRE!

From the Battlefield to Corporate America



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Key Leadership Observation

*” When you’ve got a battle to win,
leadership determines the outcome.”*

Nick Halley

KEY LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

CHOOSING THE BEST PEOPLE

The most important asset a company has is its people.

**“When building a team,
I always search for people who love to win.
If I can’t find any of those,
I look for people who hate to lose.”**

H. Ross Perot

You can always teach a job to someone with the proper qualifications. However, you can’t teach integrity, drive, honesty, loyalty, dedication and the desire to put forth the extra effort essential to get things done.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

All leadership principles are important but leading by example is the most important.

**“The quality of a leader is reflected
in the standards they set for themselves.”**

Ray Kroc, McDonald’s Founder

Leading by example is sometimes hard and takes a great deal of effort. However, if your people recognize that you lead by example, the benefits to you as a leader and to your organization will be enormous.

The test of a true leader is how that leader performs during the hard times or adverse situations – leading under fire.

POWER AND EGO

Many potentially good leaders fail because they can’t control their power and their ego.

**“Oh, it is excellent to have a giant’s strength,
But it is tyrannous to use it like a giant.”**

William Shakespeare

People who use “rule by fear” aren’t real leaders, but simply bullies. They don’t respect their followers and their followers don’t respect them.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING

Being a good listener is an essential skill for a leader.

“Formula for handling people:

1) Listen to the other person’s story;

2) Listen to the other person’s full story;

3) Listen to the other person’s full story first.”

General George C. Marshall

Always listen to all your people, and accept their unsolicited advice. However, remember the most valuable advice is most likely to be the advice you solicit or advice from unexpected sources.

BEING A GOOD FOLLOWER

Every leader can't be the prime leader in every situation – there is a time to lead and a time to follow.

**“Different situations call for different leaders.
A leader is not a leader in every situation.”**

**Kenneth A. Wells
Guide to Good Leadership**

When legal and legitimate decision are made by higher authority or more senior leaders, the other leaders in the organization must, in effect, become followers and **fully** support that decision.

PROVIDING VISION

Providing vision is one of the important duties of a leader.

**“Vision without action is a daydream.
Action without vision is a nightmare.”
Japanese Proverb**

**“Would you tell me please which way
I ought to go from here?”
“That depends a great deal on
where you want to get to.”
Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland**

Your vision should be clear, simple, and with no buzzwords. It conveys a reason for your existence. It should not be a long dissertation, but only a few hard-hitting and inspirational words that influence everyone in the organization.

SAYING “NO” TO THE STATUS QUO

One of the most dangerous and often repeated saying in business is: “If it ain't broke, don't fix it”.

**“Great leaders are never satisfied with the current level of performance. They are restlessly driven by possibilities and potential achievements.”
Donna Harrison**

We need leaders who don't accept the status quo, and who are constantly looking into the future and devising new strategies and solutions before the new realities generate serious problems.

MAKING DECISION ON LIMITED INFORMATION

Making a decision in a timely manner and executing it vigorously is better than a “perfect” decision made too late.

**“Be willing to make decisions,
This is the most important quality
in a good leader.”
General George Patton**

One of the biggest mistakes made by military and corporate leaders is delaying key decisions because they insist on having more complete information.
In extreme situations, leaders must make decisions based on the best information they have, and then be prepared to live with those decisions.

BUILDING ON STRENGTHS

We should spend much more time building and developing people’s strengths, and not so much time trying to correct their weaknesses.

**“The growth and development of people
is the highest calling of leadership.”
Harvey S. Firestone**

As a minimum, each leader – at all levels including the CEO – should have at least two weeks of leadership training per year.
Corporations should have programs to recognize, honor, and reward leaders who develop other effective leaders.

BEWARE OF “YES” PEOPLE

If you have a yes-person working for you, one of you is redundant.

**“The people to fear are not those who disagree with you, but those who disagree with you and are too cowardly to let you know.”
Napoleon Bonaparte**

LONELY AT THE TOP

One of the first lessons you learn as a leader is that every decision you make will be unpopular with some people in the organization.

**“I can not give you the formula for success,
but I can give you the formula for failure,
which is – try to please everybody”
Herbert Bayard Swope**

You’re not selected as a leader in order to be popular or to lower standards, but to lead the organization in the proper direction, even if it’s not the easy way.

**“When you are going through hell, Just keep on going.”
Winston Churchill**

FINAL THOUGHTS

Be yourself. Don’t try to fool your people and yourself with a phony “corporate” personality. People will eventually see through this façade.

**“O what may man within him hide,
though angel on the outward side.”
William Shakespeare
Measure for Measure, Act III, Scene II**

Leadership is a very difficult task but it’s enormously satisfying. Successfully leading a group of people to achieve great accomplishments, whether in combat or in a corporate environment, is the ultimate high. I wish you all the best in teaching, motivation, and inspiring yourself and your leaders to “Take Action Now” to be better leaders and followers in your organization. If your team wins, then everybody wins.