

How to be a leader IN YOUR FIELD

Are you a leader? There's a fundamental paradox surrounding leadership that we seldom consider. You see, as much as leadership is the answer, it's also the problem, writes Pat Mesiti.

In my experience, everything rises or falls on leadership. In fact, the subject of leadership is one of the most misunderstood topics I know.

When you ask people what it is, they give you any number of answers. Some say it's about vision or it's about drive, or perhaps it's about taking people somewhere. Others say it's about leading people, or it's about being creative. While all these are correct, I believe that leadership is simply this... influence. And in a world full of ideas and concepts it's easy to get distracted, especially when you consider the amount of noise there is in our marketplace. So how can we stand out and be a person of influence in our field?

Here are six undeniable features of leadership which the most successful leaders use every day.

1. BE DIFFERENT FROM THE REST

I've discovered that in the marketplace, sameness gives you comfort while difference gives you reward. It's said that if two of us are the same, one of us is irrelevant and that is so true. So, if you are going to be the leader in your field, what is your point of difference?

2. OWN YOUR FIELD

A gypsy mentality won't work in this day and age. You've got to own and dominate your field. 'Dominate' is a very strong word but it really means to be the first person in someone's mind when they think of your field, product or service.

3. LOOK AFTER YOUR PATCH

There's an old saying, "The grass is always greener on the other side." I totally

disagree. The grass is greener where you water it. And if you water your garden, i.e. your customers, your leads, your contacts, your team; you can dominate your field. This is because they become your raving fans, which can save you thousands of dollars in marketing costs.

4. CONSTANTLY RECREATE YOURSELF

This one is vital and key, and is demonstrated by the pop star Madonna. She's constantly recreating herself. In fact many ageing pop stars do it. But it's not just something ageing pop stars need to do; it's also something that companies need to do. Recently I visited a lawyer's office and to my surprise, his secretary was still using a typewriter! Can you believe it? She refused to change with the times. Interestingly, this lawyer's office was losing clients very, very fast and it's little wonder. It's so important for us to change and keep with the times. Why? Because if you are not open to change, you are not open to growth.

5. UNDERSTAND THAT CHANGE IS A PROCESS

Change is the only constant in life. To be a leader in your field, begin the process of change and manage it carefully. Too much change is the equivalent of over steering a racing car; you might crash. So change through a process and aim to become the leader rather than the follower.

6. KNOW WHAT THE MARKETPLACE NEEDS

Ask yourself, "What does the marketplace (my customers) require of me?" If you want to be the leader in your field, give people what they need, not what you think they need. By giving people what

they need, you will always be in demand. And being in demand will keep you at the forefront of popularity.

Here's the thing... when dealing with the subject of leadership, remember you can't demand it. That is dictatorship. Leadership is something which people bestow upon you. You can't force it; you've got to earn it. It comes through developing relationships and hard work. It's given to you by those who trust you, by those who admire you and those who see you as the supplier for their business, emotional, spiritual or relational needs.

So...

- Leadership is about creating a new way of life.
- To do this, leaders must foster change.
- Effective leadership is not self-appointed; you must earn it.
- Good leadership empowers and influences people to accomplish great things.
- Highly effective leaders know how to serve. **TGR**



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