

Leadership

oquy containing your own advice. The key benefit of using a podcast to connect with your followers is that, unlike any other platform, its content can be consumed while they're engaging in other activities. Your followers can listen to a podcast while they're driving, writing, researching, or mowing grass. Now, that's accessibility!

Are you using "Blogs?" A blog is the most low-maintenance piece of Internet technology that you could possibly use to communicate with your audience. Essentially, a blog is simply an online journal to which people can subscribe. You can use a blog to convey your professional expertise to your customers or to provoke your employees to take action for your customers. A blog can generate interaction, and you can dialogue with your audience in the "comments" section. You can also use a blog to generate content that you will use to feed other platforms. And, due to the fresh textual content it provides, there is nothing better for generating search engine traffic to your Web site than a blog.

Are you using "E-Newsletters?" A blog is public. Anyone can find it. An e-mail newsletter, like a traditional newsletter, only goes out to the people you send it to. The advantage of the e-newsletter is that you have control over who receives it. Your e-mail lists, whether they are customers, prospects, or employees, represent the most direct influence you can have on your audience. A person's e-mail inbox is private and they don't grant access to it to just anyone. When you send out e-newsletters, always have something valuable to say. Nobody likes spam. But if you aren't using e-mail to reach your audience, you're missing out. Most people aren't going to check your blog every day. But everyone is going to check their e-mail.

Are you using "Social Media?" On social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, you can both create original content and use content from other platforms like your blog and your podcast. But the more important way of using social media is to interact with the content other people are sharing. Like, share and comment on their Facebook status updates. Participate in groups on LinkedIn. Reply to their tweets on Twitter. Want to know how people who aren't celebrities get so many followers

on Twitter? They talk to them. Don't use social media just to broadcast your content. It's called "social" media for a reason. Be social!

Are you using "Webinars?" Selling to consumers, you probably won't have much use of Webinars for your customers. However, they can be great tools for motivating and educating your employees. A Webinar is a more visual, interactive conference call. You can show a presentation to your team and allow them to interact with you virtually while you're showing it. You can also have video chats if you want the conference call to be more interactive. Google has a really neat feature called "Hangouts" that allows up to ten people to video conference with one another for free.

By definition, leaders should be among the first ones to embrace new technologies. If they aren't first, then they aren't really leaders, are they? Today more than ever, leaders have the opportunity to inspire their followers and maintain constant communication with their audiences. Technology isn't going away. The only question is, will you be laggard or an early adopter? Leaders are always on the cutting-edge. Leaders get there first.

Who knows what's next? The Internet has been a truly revolutionary leap for leaders using technology to communicate. We can only imagine what will surpass it in the future. But, for the time being, we must take advantage of the resources available to us. Podcasting. Blogging. Sending newsletters. Interacting on social media. Participating in Webinars. All of these are things we could be doing. Our followers are listening. The question is, "when are we going to pick up the platforms and start talking?"

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Leadership From the Heart

By Kerry Elam

Who do you think of as pivotal leaders from the past? Who presently stands out? What qualities do these leaders possess? Who has been most influential to you as a leader in your career?

By asking these questions, you will determine what resonates with you in regards to leadership. Different qualities will stand out for each of us. Leaders such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa and Thomas Jefferson all possess the quality of leading from their heart.

They were not worried about what others might think as they felt their focus on others rights and feelings was most important.

As Thomas Jefferson said, "The glow of one warm thought is to me worth more than money." To lead, you must allow yourself to make decisions based on how you feel and take into consideration impacts decisions might have on your employees. Being profitable is important—yet focusing on your employee's well-being is critical to your success.

The remainder of this article will provide some key principles incorporating lessons learned from leadership books.

Principles

Leading an organization or a team is a huge responsibility as you have others career's in your hands. Also, as a team member, you have a key role as your actions and tone will be followed by others. It is just like when you sneeze and someone sneezes, attitudes can be contagious. When going through your day, take a moment to see how you can improve upon implementing these principles. Remember, it is a practice as all we do in life ... practice leads to perfection.

■ **Accountability:** In the book, *Leadership and Self-Deception* by the



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Arbinger Institute, it defines being in the box as, "having self-deception—the inability to see that one has a problem and that everyone has a problem." By taking accountability for each situation versus blaming others, you promote everyone to work towards the collective good of the team, not individual accomplishments.

■ **Treat others as people:** This goes back to basic principles we learned as children, do unto others as you would have them to you. Be

reasonable in all your dealings and ensure you are looking at the big picture.

■ **Be self-aware:** In the book, *The Psychology of Winning*, self-awareness is the first trait mentioned. It states, "Winners are more aware. Winners are honest. Positive self-awareness is self-honesty. You are a winner when what you think, what you feel, and what you do are nearly consistent." Knowing how you react and deal with situations can provide insight and guide you to making the best decisions and having the most rewarding interactions with others.

■ **Take time to understand by listening to what others are saying:** An activity to try is to pair up with a co-worker and each person takes turn talking for three minutes. The person listening has to stay engaged without saying any words. Then, you switch roles. You can gain a better understanding of the importance of really listening. Many times, we interject with our examples and how we feel about a situation without fully listening and understanding what the other person has to say.

■ **Compassion:** Have compassion for what the other person may be

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going through on a personal level or even dealing with stressful work deadlines: Put yourself in the others shoes when interacting to see their side.

These principles will help you to build an environment in which you want to be a part of as you are allowing your team to be accountable for their role and they will know you value their efforts and they can be honest with you as you will listen to what they are saying. The key is to ensure everyone knows you are truly listening and care.

Books

There are many leadership books on

the market, the books below are more based on the attitude you are bringing to work. It goes back to the leaders that stand out at the beginning. As Mother Teresa always said, "Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier." That means anyone that you come in counter with from your barista to your star employee to your significant other.

In summary, working towards a common goal together as a team is the key to success. You do not have to be the boss to be a leader as we all make contributions daily to those around us. Be mindful of judgments and take time to see the entire situation. Take accountability for your role at all

times. Stop before you get caught up in talking about others. Work as a team towards your common goals. Eleanor Roosevelt said, "Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people."

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operations at Actualize Consulting where her leadership training program has successfully influenced a teamwork environment at some of the world's largest companies. She may be reached by phone at (703) 868-1506, e-mail kelam@actualizeconsulting.com or visit www.actualizeconsulting.com.

Book Conscious Capitalism

Author
John Mackey, Raj Sisodia

Key Lesson

Written by the co-CEO of Whole Foods, the authors share their model of the concept of Conscious Capitalism. It states, "Better leaders=Better world. The quality of our leaders affects the quality of our lives. Every good leader contributes in ways, big and small, toward making the world a better place—one day, one life, and one company at a time." They also define the key qualities of a leader to be trust, accountability, caring, transparency, integrity, loyalty, and egalitarianism.

Leadership and Self-Deception, Getting Out of the Box

Author
The Arbinger Institute

A story that reminds us to be accountable for our actions and to treat people as people and understand what everyone is dealing with on a daily basis. You are the only one that makes you feel a certain way. Nobody else makes you feel bad.

Man's Search for Meaning

Author
Viktor Frankl

Individuals can get through any situation with a positive outlook. Frankl was in a Nazi concentration camp and was able to survive by maintaining an attitude of gratitude and positive thinking.

The Power of Full Engagement

Author
Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz

Provides examples of being fully engaged in all that you do. For instance, they denote the full engagement principles as being:

- Managing energy, not time, is the key to high performance
- Full engagement requires drawing on four separate, but related dimensions of energy: Physical, emotional, mental and spiritual
- Because energy capacity diminishes with both overuse and underuse, we must learn to balance energy expenditure with intermittent energy renewal
- To build capacity, we must push beyond our normal limits, training in the same systematic way that elite athletes do
- Positive energy rituals—highly specific routines for managing energy—are the key to full engagement and sustained high performance.

The Psychology of Winning

Author
Dr. Denis Waitley

Denotes the 10 qualities of a winner are positive self-awareness, esteem, control, motivation, expectancy, image, direction, discipline, dimension and projection.

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