

Leadership skills: qualities of a great leader

[Business](#), [Leadership](#)



As mentioned by the musician, the essential task of leadership is “changing the way work works, so you can improve the work.” In other words, leaders lead their group or team by influencing them to clear their minds about something they are not sure about and persuade the group to move towards the right path by sharing collective knowledge. The good leaders have that vision to see the future to avoid the fear of unknown or unknowable.

Gary Yukl defines leadership as “the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives.” (Rowe & Guerrero, 2011) Moreover, the management tries to perfect the current processes or procedures to fulfill the overall objective of the organization. However, leadership is based on sharing the collective knowledge and influencing a group of people to look at different alternatives to solve a problem.

Moreover, the musician describes the five L “qualities” of good leaders.

Following are the five L “qualities”:

Leaders do lead: The first quality is that leaders are accountable for leading their group or team and they lead from front or behind. In other words, leading from the front means that the leaders actually tell their group or team members what to do and they explain them how to accomplish different goals. However, some leaders believe in leading from behind which means they empower their group or team to think what they need to accomplish and how they should accomplish those tasks. Depending on the situation, these leaders decide whether to lead from the front or behind.

Leaders listen: The second quality is that leaders must have good listening skills. Without listening to their followers, leaders cannot understand their point of view and it makes it hard for them to lead effectively. After all, the job of a leader is to share the knowledge among all group or team members and without communication effectively, it is impossible to lead. So, leaders must have good listening skills, so they can give proper feedback to their followers. Good leaders not only listen with their ears but they also use their eyes to listen to their followers. Sometime words that are unsaid say a lot and good leaders are aware of this fact.

Leaders learn continuously: The third quality is that a good leader understands that the learning never stops and he/she tries to learn from people around. Leaders learn by observing how people behave or how they react to different issues. Leadership is all about making a difference, so if a leader is unable to make a positive change to the group or team he/she is not a good leader. So, good leaders always look over the shoulders of their followers to continue learning and it helps them to test their own skills. They need to look ahead, for example, if things are going their way in the present, they don't rely on that, but they are always keen to improve themselves.

Leaders love: The fourth quality is that good leaders always admire the good work of their followers. Leaders make their followers believe that nothing is impossible if the followers are determined enough to achieve their goals. A good leader knows how to take that extra step to make a difference and this skills distinguish a good leader from a great leader. Leaders know how to

create that atmosphere in which the followers believe that they are following a good leader. Without believing the principles of their leaders, it is hard for the followers to walk in the same direction and good leaders know how to make their followers believe them.

Leaders lose with grace: The fifth quality is that leaders know how to lose with grace. When a team experiences failure, a good leader knows how to step up and take responsibility for that failure. For instance, when Canucks failed to advance to the second round of the Stanley cup playoffs, the captain of Vancouver Canucks took full responsibility by saying, " we choked." This is a sign of a good leader who knows how to lose with grace. Good leaders do not believe in pin pointing fingers at different individuals after the team fails to accomplish their objectives. A good leader makes his/her team believe that if they win, they win as a team and if they lose, they lose as a team.

I strongly agree that these qualities are individual attributes but this does not mean that an individual who was not born with these qualities cannot adapt them. Any individual who is determined to lead a team can use these qualities to influence his/her followers. For example, I always feel that I can lead our cricket team but I panic when we lose continuously. However, it does not mean that I can't adapt the quality of losing with grace. I believe that if I work hard enough, I can adapt that quality.

Even though I don't know much about the music industry, but I think we have good leaders in all sectors. In the music industry, people influence lives of many followers without any direct connection with them. For example,

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Michael Jackson was indirectly leading so many youngsters to follow their dreams. He was an inspiration for many teenagers, but he might not have had all these qualities. He shared love with his followers and he motivated them to take that extra step to achieve success. However, it is tough to say that people from the music industry have all these qualities because more than anything else, it depends on your individual character.

In my field of study which is accounting, these five L qualities can play a major role for leaders to lead. For example, the accounting manager of the company I work for uses most of these qualities to lead our accounting group. He is a very good listener which helps us to tell him our side of the story because his perspective is different from ours. At Kwantlen, Barbara who was my accounting teacher uses these qualities to influence her students to achieve success. She is always keen to help students by making them think about different accounting issues and she also focuses on learning from the students by listening to them carefully.

In order to learn these five qualities, it is better to focus on each quality step by step. The first step would be to become a good listener. This can be done by becoming more patient to calm yourself down. Once an individual becomes a good listener, the next step would be to learn how to appreciate the good work of your co-workers, friends, followers and even family members. This would help an individual to gain confidence from people around him/her. After that, focus on sharing knowledge because this would allow an individual to believe in continuous learning. Once the individual has all these qualities, the next step would be to lead people or a group by using techniques

such as leading from front or leading from behind. It all depends on the situation or issues that individual is dealing with. The last step would be to learn to share the success and failure among all group members by sticking together as a group.