

# Leadership 101

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The Civil Air Patrol is the United States Air Force Auxiliary.

As a Cadet Staff Sergeant in the Civil Air Patrol I have learned that there are three elements of effective leadership: communication, vision, and knowledge. A leader is a person that knows how to communicate his ideas, has a vision of where he wants to take his followers, and is knowledgeable about the subject at hand. There were several individuals who fought for the rights of African Americans to be treated as human beings who displayed these leadership qualities. Such extraordinary leaders were Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

For instance, when Frederick Douglass was a slave, he taught himself how to read, because he knew the importance of knowledge. One of the reasons Harriet Tubman was able lead so many slaves to freedom was because she had a clear vision where she wanted to take the slaves. Martin Luther King Jr. was able bring about racial justice because he was a great communicator. Knowledge is when an individual knows a substantial amount about a given subject.

Knowledge is critical to leadership because if the leader is not qualified with the correct knowledge, then he should not be leading. For example, Frederick Douglass knew that one could not lead if he did not have the knowledge of education. According to the narrative of Frederick Douglass, Frederick Douglass was born a slave in 1818. When he was about eight years old, his master sent him to work as a houseboy for his relatives, shortly after his arrival his new mistress began to teach him the alphabet. When her husband found out, he forbade her to continue the instruction.

Right at that moment in Frederick Douglass' life, he realized that knowledge is truly power: his master did not want him to learn how to read, because he did not want him to be empowered. From that moment on Frederick Douglass took it upon himself to learn how to read. He made the neighborhood boys his teachers, by giving away his food in exchange for lessons in reading and writing. At about the age of twelve or thirteen Douglass purchased a copy of *The Columbian Orator*, a popular schoolbook of the time, which helped him to gain an understanding and appreciation of the power of the spoken and written words, as two of the most effective means by which to bring about permanent and positive change (Fremarjo). Little did Frederick Douglass know that not only was he empowering himself, but he was preparing himself to be a leader.

One of the other key components of leadership is vision. Leaders have to be visionaries, so they can imagine new, better, and more exciting places to take their followers. Without a vision of where the group is going, there is no need for anyone to lead them there. A great visionary leader was Harriet Tubman Born into slavery on Maryland's Eastern Shore, Harriet Tubman experienced all of the hardships and unfairness associated with slavery. Because of these reason, Harriet Tubman set out to the north to gain her freedom. It was a long and hard journey, but in 1849 Harriet Tubman found herself north of the Mason Dixon line, a freewomen for the first time in her life.

However, realizing that all of her family and friends were still enslaved, she gained the vision in her mind to help them win their freedom as well. This vision was so strong that she went to Philadelphia and found work cooking, <https://assignbuster.com/leadership-101/>

laundering, and scrubbing floors to save money to finance rescue trips. She also became involved with the city's large and active abolitionist (anti-slavery) organizations and with organizers of the Underground Railroad, a secret network through which slaves were helped in escaping from bondage in the South to freedom in the North and Canada (Lakewood Public Library). When she was ready Harriet Tubman undertook some 20 hazardous missions in which she covertly journeyed slaves from slavery to freedom in the north. During these missions, Harriet Tubman was so determined on accomplishing her vision of taking slaves to freedom that she carried a gun so she could shoot any of her passengers who wanted to turn back. Because of her strong vision she was able to take many slaves to freedom, and she never lost any of them along the way.

A leader is an artist who assembles a collage, people are his medium and communication is the glue that holds it all together. Without communication everything would be in a state of disarray. Communication is the art of transferring thoughts, ideas, and meanings from person to person. One of the greatest communicators of all time was Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK).

According to Gale Opposing Viewpoints In Context, after graduating from college MLK moved to his native city of Atlanta, where he became pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church . Since being a pastor requires a lot of communication, this is one of the areas where MLK honed this skill. MLK displayed his outstanding skill of communication everywhere he went. One of the most profound examples was his " I have a dream speech." A famous line from the speech was, " I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their

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skin but by the content of their character (Sawinski).” MLK was such a great leader because he knew how to communicate effectively.

He used words that connected people from all racial backgrounds rather than separate them. During the time of his speech America was divided because of racial lines, but because MLK used the glue of communication he helped put America back together. Because leadership requires transferring thoughts, ideas, and meanings from person to person, communication is a key component of leadership. All movements, bands, and groups have to have a leader that knows how to communicate. A person cannot successfully lead people if they do not possess these three the credentials. For example , if an individual cannot communicate ideas and orders to his followers then he cannot lead.

If the individual has no vision of where he wants to take his followers then he cannot lead. Finally, the leader has to be a knowledgeable individual in the field he his leading, or his followers will find someone else with greater credentials. The best leaders are the people who excel in all of the above stated categories. All in all, leadership is the crossword where knowledge, vision, and communication meet.