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## Essay on Leadership

Part 1: What did you like about the topic? What struck you as interesting?

Why did the topic stimulate positive emotion?

The most important thing I like about the book, *On Leadership*, by John Gardner, is how it inspires people from all walks of life to become leaders and become involved in their specific endeavors. By contextualizing the qualities of leaders in the new cultural setting, the book inspires even simple students like me to strive hard and make a difference. The concept of leadership is presented in fundamental truths and it engages the readers to approach and apply the principles of leadership by simply addressing the needs of the times. It is not a big and serious way of introducing the concept of leadership but a matter of fact way of how it can be applied.

The striking thing about his book is how the author presented with very good illustrations his leadership theories. His leadership theories went beyond the surface and it attracts most those who already imbibe the leadership values and principles as they practice it. He presented very vibrant leaders from history to effectively illustrate his thoughts about leadership. For young readers, this is very motivating and it inspires us to do more and give more not because we want to be called leaders but because we want to be true and sincere. I find it most striking that such book can do this.

I think the stimulating factor is the directness and humility by which the book extols leadership from every reader. This is a challenge by which the book positively enforces the students and it is very effective in this regard. It is also very encouraging that how he decries the present apathy in our society.

He wants the readers to change the U. S. society yet he did not sound

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apologetic or condescending. He humbly presents the challenges of the times and how leadership will be a simple antidote to these problems. In all things, it is positively stimulating if the demands are presented in a nice manner. This is how he presented the need for good leaders and he inspires those who will rise up to the challenge with imbued confidence and trust.

## **Part 2: What did you not like about the topic? Why did the topic stimulate negative emotion?**

There are no portions which I did not like about the book. Perhaps the more sophisticated conception of leaders versus managers is somehow boring for me. This is because I cannot conceive yet the idea of a manager and how it differentiates with a leader. I have an old notion which groups both concepts as one. I still think that an effective manager is a good leader and that there is no distinction between the two. Hence, it somehow stimulates a negative notion while I was reading it.

I have a preconceived notion that managers preside over one group. This is the same way as leaders take over a group. Hence, it is difficult for me to compare and contrast the meaning of leaders and managers. The distinguishing elements are not very distinguished, in my own personal opinion. This is because I consider that practicality and pragmatism are both part of their jobs. They also share the same power or influence over people. They are also envisioning the same success for their organizations. Both of them also employ the same skills and craft in order to reach their objectives.

### **Part 3: What did you learn? Summarize your major take aways and intellectual sound bites.**

Leader and leadership are not very strong or hard concept which are very difficult to accomplish. As the author says, it just takes good sense to understand and be able to practice it.

### **Leadership should be demystified in order to make it more meaningful and productive.**

Leadership is the way by which we persuade others to follow our example and work towards the goals that we want to achieve.

The role of a leader is ascertained by the time. There are several needs and roles filled by various people. The leader is borne out of the context which he is in.

Leaders are important parts of a system. They do or are tasked to do specific functions which are all all required in order to accomplish a task or attain a goal.

The influence of a leader is channeled by good communications. This must be a two way channel wherein the leader shares his vision and goals and the followers feedback whether it is attainable or not.

### **Leaders must also bend and heed his followers. He must befriend them.**

The word follower should not be taken as a passive word. Instead, this should mean comparable responsibility and accountability on the part of both leaders and followers.

Peer pressure is a somewhat mild term to describe the soft element of

coercion which the leader must enforce. While this is not supposed to be taken negatively, it is also realistic to acknowledge that leaders should reinforce peer pressure to realize certain goals, especially when the followers or the situation is defeating the goals or functions which must be accomplished.

The leadership needs vary from one situation to another, from one country to another or one organization from another. Culture is a vital factor which defines how leaders and leadership are measured.

Leadership is not just a position or a status. The concept of nobility is also a very traditional way of rendering what true leader must be. While leaders often have some measure of power, in their most effective way of influencing others, their true power lies in their ability to coerce followers.

Leaders are not just followed because the followers believe in their words or actions. There is something more to it. This abstract element makes them persuasive and charismatic and eventually successful in their jobs.

Legitimized power is not leadership. Sometimes, even those who do not have legitimized powers can be powerful and influential and they can topple the present system or set up.

Leadership is not learned or acquired overnight. Leaders often have the innate attributes and skills but most of the part requires their dedication and commitment. They work towards achieving their ends with most passion, energy and efforts.

**Leadership is not often bequeathed to anyone. If one likes to become a leader, he needs to exert his efforts.**

Leaders are an elite class by their own distinguished positions, skills, personality traits, and other attributes. While some are born with these, others work well to achieve it.

Even when one is born with nobility, leadership is another class by itself.

People who are assigned certain leadership role should take it as a privilege.

**Reference:**

Gardner, John. (1989). On Leadership. New York: Free Press.