

Leadership philosophy

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Eisenhower said once said, " Leadership consists of nothing but taking responsibility for everything that goes wrong and giving your subordinates credit for everything that goes well". (<http://www.maxwell.af.mil/au/awc/ns/electives/sld/slds.htm>)

Any deliberation about leadership must begin with the recognition of the fact that people want to be led. It is obvious to a great extent in the face of a calamity they find comfort and inspiration from their leaders. This is also true on a day-to-day basis. People tend to need and seek out guidance from strong leaders. " Leaders organize people—whether in a multinational corporation, a civic or charitable enterprise, a family business, or a high school." (Ashby and Miles, 2002)

According to Fairholm (1998), " one of the fundamental characteristics of leadership philosophy is its emphasis on a few values held in common by group members". These values are summed up in a vision of what the group and its members are and can become. " In the United States, the vision typically integrates values described first by the founding fathers.

These values include personal liberty, respect for life, justice, unity and happiness. These are widespread values that are essentially held and to the achievement of which most people dedicate their energies. Unless leaders tap these energizing values, they risk not being able to lead". (Fairholm, 1998)

A Policeman's life is riddled with high standards of selfless service. They have to have integrity and it is widely known that they have worked hard without waver since their inception.

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A question which arises often is “ How do you lead men in such a way that they will put their life on the line for you in an encounter situation in times of danger, and work twenty hours a day for weeks and sometimes months to resolve a crisis?” Of course this can be achieved through perpetual torture and extreme fear of the leading officer but Constables and Lieutenants under such a Captain will not give their job a 100 percent and the direct negative outcome of that will be that the team will not be functioning at full capacity. Firstly a leader must illustrate devotion and commitment to a life of service.

Secondly, it is of vital importance that a leader must be considerate and concerned about his people. (Puryear, Jr.) These tie in with the principle of observation of a role model. A leader’s subordinates have to see that their leader is entirely dedicated to his job and doesn’t only treat it as a job or simple tasks which have to be performed out of duty. A leader must display his love of the occupation so that his subordinates have a role model to follow. However, they will not follow him without question if he doesn’t demonstrate affection for those under him. There is no need for physical forms of affection.

The kind of affection needed can simply be demonstrated by thoughtfulness from a leader. A leader needs to be genuinely concerned about the safety of those under him. In a job such a police officer’s this is particularly important. An officer's subordinates need to know without any doubt they their lives are in the hands of someone who cares. Brilliant examples of concern for staff have been littered through the US military history, “ Gen. Vandenberg invited a colonel to sit in on a conference with the legendary Macarthur. Gen. Twining gave up his Christmas vacation to permit Quesada to catch up on his <https://assignbuster.com/leadership-philosophy-research-paper-samples/>

flight training. General John P. Ryan took coffee to mechanics working late at night.

General Brown allowed a crewman to release his frustration by putting on his cowboy hat and boots. He also provided flights home during temporary duty for his officers and men, and he saw to it that enlisted personnel living in barracks could have a leisurely breakfast on Sundays." (Fairholm, 1998) With such an amazing array of leadership in our country's history, one should take a leaf out of their book. Some may think that all leaders would comprehend and be aware of the significance of looking out for those underneath your authority, yet such is not always the case.

A primary principle which policemen follow is to develop a sense of responsibility among their subordinates. General Marshall would say throughout his career to his subordinate officers, " Fix the problem, not the blame".

At times, a leader has to rely on himself and more imperatively, on his workforce to see him through the storm or bad weather. (Barber, 2004) It is of vital importance that the subordinates discover that they are capable of achieving more, the subordinates assessment of what constitutes of difficult is a direct consequence of their frame of reference.

This problem can be solved with mentorship. Part of mentoring someone involves placing a subordinate in contact with people at the top who are making the toughest decisions. As Murphy and Riggio (2003) put it, " Opportunities such as observing another's leadership and management skills

in action or gaining self-awareness through another's perspective are just a few of the benefits of mentoring”.

Using Gen. Shy Meyer's definition, a mentor is someone who provides " guidance, counseling, advice, and teaching" and, with that, " door opening" - meaning opportunity. " The result of door opening and mentorship is that with progress in rank and responsibility one gets the toughest jobs, the longest hours, and the greatest sacrifices in family life." (Puryear Jr., 2000)

Unfortunately many leaders have developed the " one-size-fits-all" mentality. This blunder is the outcome of an ironic combination of overconfidence and under confidence in the value of an old, recognized and formerly victorious plan and under confidence in being able to master or develop an original but new and so strange plan. Sometimes Police officers want to get fast results and so get impatient and apply this theory their operations.

One's previous knowledge is always an advantage and it is a huge part of any operation but it must only come into play in the context of the present circumstances. Some may attribute the habit of to a lack of ability to comprehend or even mental laziness. Inductive reasoning is required to avoid such an error. This entails the skill to look at and understand the bigger picture. Of course this may require the investigation of hundreds or thousands of concrete facts and observations, then set aside those which are insignificant and of no great consequence and finally amalgamate the remainder of it into tiny basic conclusions and standards.

The final question has to be " What does this all add up to?" This can be done through two ways; Inductive reasoning and Deductive reasoning.

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Inductive reasoning is based on simplification prioritizing. It involves turning complexity into simplicity by imposing order on seeming chaos and identifying what has to be done before any other outcomes can be achieved. What is a fundamental need to be considered and this fundamental feature is what everything else will rely on and function upon.

Deductive reasoning works in another manner. It involves integrating what has been discovered with prior knowledge and then applying it to the current situation. Some may find the level of complexity required too great. So they bluster and make demands on subordinates and use familiar strategies, but they never get to the real heart of the problem because they do not know what it is. There may be a lack of creative imagination as well. All of this is very hard mental work and requires intelligence and logical thinking; a policeman's work is not only restricted to physical activities!

A few leaders often do not know that they cannot handle the job properly. More often than the foundation of their self-esteem is always being right and always being in control of things. They would feel humiliated and degraded if they admit that they cannot complete a task correctly. They lie to themselves by convincing themselves that they can do it and fall into a whirlwind of desperate, inept measures.

None of them could be right but that point they stop thinking. They replace thinking with clumsy actions. When things begin to go bitter, they lash out at their subordinates and then segregate themselves so that they will not have to hear the bad news. All this makes them progressively less able to fix what is really wrong with the operation. (Murphy and Riggio, 2003)

Henry L. Stimson, the secretary of War through 1900 and 1911 once said, " I had been accustomed throughout my life to classify all public servants into one or the other of two general categories: one, the men who were thinking what they could do for their job; the other, the men who were thinking what the job could do for them." (Purveyer, 2009) True leaders who others follow without any doubts or questions even in the worse of circumstances are those who do the former.

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