



GOOD LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

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Leadership is a very broad concept. One is expected to use their behavioral skills so as to inspire the people around you and eventually winning their trust and respect. So when we talk about good leadership qualities, we tend to refer to the basic human traits such as honesty, sincerity, courage and determination, all of which make up the characteristic of a good leader. When we talk of leadership, there is a certain range of characteristics that makes a person stand out among his peers. Therefore, as a leader, one is expected to motivate, inspire and lead people. This will only take effect if a person has all the good leadership skills that he needs.

The characteristics of a leader play a vital role in the kind of leadership a person asserts. This can be developed through learning and experience but those who have an inborn ability to lead, make good leaders which inevitably leads to successful leadership. If you are in a leading position, it requires a set of abilities. According to Napoleon Bonaparte, "A leader is a dealer in hope." Hence when leaders are chosen, they would want them to live up to their expectations. A lot of hopes are pinned on them to bring about radical change and reform. To have effective leadership, it is essential for them to display few characteristics of good leaders.

For one, the most important characteristic is self leadership-this is true when a leader leads himself towards excellence, then he would be able to lead his followers on the same path. It also follows that he should have enthusiasm, thus, inspiring those around him with his passion and dedication. A true leader cannot exist if he cannot win the trust of others (then we talk about setting leadership principles, i.e., integrity and honesty) A good leader practices what he or she preaches leading others to follow him, so he should be trustworthy. An essential trait of a good leader is believing in their own abilities, having that confidence to lead effectively. A leader must prove to be orderly (which gives security to the people around him) in times of uncertainty and stress. Amidst many challenges and crisis that may arise along the way, a leader should be calm and be able to maintain his composure. The one who maintains and have a cool head in times of need is a great leader. A good leader should be highly knowledgeable with regards to his field of work and should serve as an inspiration to his followers.

Moreover, he should have an analytic mind too, keeping the main goal in focus. He should also be able to motivate his followers to work as a team, ready to bond with them, anticipate the future and work with a vision (for the achievement of their common goals). He does not demand or command respect for he earns it. Among other qualities, a good leader should also have a good sense of humor, because after all, they say that laughter is the best medicine. A vital leadership trait of a good leader is to have effective communication, meaning he should be willing to accept relevant suggestions from his subordinates; having the ability to listen, question, analyze and observe effectively. A true leader would always have high standards and he will always strive for excellence in every aspect. A characteristic of a good leader is to have that positive attitude even in the worst situations to successfully overcome challenges that they may encounter. To top them all, to make a good leader is to be passionate in the work that he does. Whether these characteristics are natural or developed, a great leader will always work to the best of these traits in order to achieve excellence. Good leaders therefore are continually working and studying to improve their leadership skills and NOT only resting on their laurels.

Questions for discussion:

1. Do you think good leaders are born not made or is it vice-versa? Support your answer.
2. Among these characteristics, which do you think is very plausible?
3. Are all of these traits on how to be a good leader attainable?
4. How many of these characteristics are inherent in us and what are they?
5. Can radical change be achieved having only five of these traits? How?