

## Challenging Leadership Principles-From an original source

This article puts over what I see as essential leadership principles. They are taken from a book I have been working on that uses as the key source, the gospels. The gospels being the reporting by four people (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) of the words and actions of the founder and leader of Christianity, Jesus Christ. Jesus was the foundation of a world changing movement that grew during its founder's short life and went on to multiply after his death into one of the world's largest group of followers. Indeed one definition of a leader is that you can tell them by their followers as a leader cannot exist or be a leader without followers.

Two thousand years later, this movement continues. So the premise is that its leader must have said something enduring and by examining his reported words, then there must be many leadership principles that all leaders can learn from and benefit from.

My approach was therefore to go through the Gospels, principally Matthew, and select those words of Jesus that have some relevance to leadership and management principles.

Next, the leadership principles were extracted and these are identified below.

### Leadership Keys:

- Leadership and change are directly connected
- Leaders bring in a new order and shift the paradigm
- Leaders need a "servant heart" that gives, rather than takes
- Leaders must be clear on whom/what they are and stand for, as it is this inner side will drive what they say and do
- Leaders have to attract followers
- Leaders will not always find a "fit" with every person and will be often criticised
- Leaders use a vision/mission statement; (money as the main principle is a wrong one)

### Leadership Style:

- Leaders show by example: “come with me and I will teach you” and in effect, they will also recruit their own replacement.
- Leaders have a bold and decisive presence: they practice “walking in front” and literally will pull and lead people. They will not be a bully that forces people, or, be one who pushes and “kicks from behind.”
- Leaders correct mistakes with people one on one; if the mistakes cannot be rectified then they need to “go public.” If it still cannot be rectified, then they will need to treat the person as not being a part of the “team.”
- Leaders use strong and direct communication and say it like they see it. This means accepting that inevitably, some will think they are being rude. To communicate the most effectively, face to face contact is needed as it is body language that really communicates; (eye contact is the most revealing part of body language).
- Leaders trust: This means an acceptance that the lack of trust will usually destroy any relationship between people; no trust, then, no relationship.

#### Leadership Roles:

- Planning is needed to give the desired results; inputs give outputs, they are connected directly.
- Leaders know their people and recognise that people will use different methods and therefore, some methods in certain circumstances, may be more appropriate than others.
- Leaders select the appropriate number of people for the team
- Leaders give clear directions to the team
- Leaders need to give power and authority to the leadership team
- Followers need motivating to do things and when people are motivated with a compulsive internal drive, they can be unstoppable, as the only motivation that will ever last, is one that satisfies a core internally held value/belief.

In the book I have added my own words to amplify these principles. This amplification examines what needs to be done and how it can be done. It shows how to roll down the principles into current management applications so that these principles can then be readily applied in business and organisational practices.

Some of the above principles are straight forward and are common sense. However whilst they are sense, they are often not too common. Additionally many of them are quite challenging. The servant heart one was interesting and I speculate that there are many people who whilst having a leader job title, will not actually see their role in this way. This may be due to the current role confusion between leaders and managers, for example the job title Team Leader is commonly used yet; we rarely find titles of Team Managers or Team Supervisors. Additionally, we can find that some former supervisor titles have been changed to become Team Leaders as this is more "sexy" and sound better.

The current outworking when using either a leader or a manager title is more towards making the leader as being the best one, the superior one and the one that has the higher status. Maybe however a servant heart, is perhaps not one that is seen as "sexy" or deserving status in many organisations?

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Stuart has operational and strategic experience in varied commercial service industries - gained in the UK and Nigeria - and is particularly interested in the "people issues" of management processes, as well as logistics and supply-chain management.

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