



## *What is Leadership?*

Leadership is a word commonly used in reference to formal leadership - corporate teams, individuals in positions of authority, and for those who guide, direct and well... lead. But the word also refers to those who are not formal leaders – those in community service, a leading contender, a mentor, a peer, someone leading a full life. So what is leadership when it is applied to so many different people, in so many different ways?

The answer is found in knowing where leadership begins – personal leadership. All formal leadership begins here.

Personal leadership begins with knowing yourself and the direction you want your life to take. The ability to define what you want out of life and how you're going to get it is the first step in developing personal leadership.

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*“Leadership is practiced  
not so much in words as  
in attitude and in actions”.*

*Harold Geneen*

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Personal leadership then, is accountability for oneself. When you accept the responsibility and accountability of your own personal leadership, you will begin to realize that you, not others, are responsible for your life. You alone are responsible for your attitudes, actions, and the rewards and consequences of both. You determine the course of your destiny and become the master of your life. You gain the kind of self confidence that drives the successful outcome of any goal you set for yourself.

This kind of confidence, determination and solution-oriented thinking and action is the foundation of formal leadership – and determines our influence and impact on others – it is leadership by example. Think for a moment of all the situations in which you are looked to as a leader, either formally or informally... with your children, friends, peers, co-workers, customers, organizations, and ask yourself, “What leadership example am I setting?”

*“If your actions inspire others to  
dream more, learn more, do more  
& become more, you are a leader.”*

*John Quincy Adams*

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*“Really big people are, above  
everything else, courteous, considerate  
& generous, not just to some people in  
some circumstances, but to everyone  
all the time.”*

Thomas J. Watson, Founder of IBM

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Take time to.....

- *...be enthusiastic.* Enthusiasm is contagious. Do everything with enthusiasm. You will find it an inspiration to your whole organization.
- *...plan.* Plan your work in an orderly way and you will find work goes more smoothly – not only for you, but for every fellow worker.
- *...listen.* You will not learn while you are talking. Listen and acquire knowledge. Listen and become popular with your fellow workers, customers, and prospects. By listening, you let people know you are interested in them, their ideas, and their problems.
- *...praise.* Go out of your way to compliment people for an outstanding job. This is the spirit that makes people want to succeed by making them want to try harder.
- *...say thank you.* Make it a habit to say thank you to everyone: to customers and fellow workers whenever they do something for you. Everyone appreciates it, and you will find it does something for you, too.
- *...smile.* Smile when you're giving instructions or explaining an operation – smile when you talk to people. It is the best known way to win friends and cooperation.
- *...explain.* In talking to others about their work, be specific, be clear, say just what you mean, and give the reason why. We all do our best when we understand what is expected of us.
- *...give direction cheerfully.* Everyone who works has to take or give direction. But we all respond better when it is given cheerfully.
- *...do it now.* Don't put things off. The longer you do so, the more difficult the job becomes. Let people know they can depend on you to get things done.
- *...think.* You will find this the shortest, surest way to success. It avoids many costly mistakes. Think and you will find your work more interesting and less tiring.