

GIVING

Characteristics of effective leadership

BY JULIA EAST

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This article is the second in a five-part series on leadership in which we take a look at what makes leaders effective. Effective leadership can be one of the most precious gifts people or organizations can receive.

Followers want a leader they can trust. An important component of building trust is honesty. A successful leader will be honest in his intentions, actions, and words. People are reluctant to follow a person they consider to be dishonest for a number of reasons, including the fear of being misled and concern that the leader's dishonesty will reflect on their own personal honesty. Honesty also requires a leader to admit when he has made a mistake.

People expect their leader to be forward looking, spending a portion of time creating a vision and long-term direction for the organization. A competent leader has the ability to get things done. A competent leader inspires confidence in others by his proven track record, but beyond this, a competent leader has the ability to bring out the best in others.

Followers want a leader who inspires. An inspirational leader is enthusiastic, energetic, and has a positive attitude about the future. Inspirational leaders help followers find meaning and purpose in their lives and their work.

Organizational values are principles that guide how work is done and how employees, customers, and vendors are treated. They are also the criteria used to select goals and behaviors. These values are reflected by employees' actions throughout the organization - from janitor to senior leadership.

It is important for leaders to be able to create shared organizational values. People working in organizations with shared values have greater energy, enthusiasm, and sense of corporate community. These organizations usually enjoy increased production, performance, revenue, and stock prices, as well as increased organizational loyalty by employees, customers, and vendors.

When a leader aligns values with actions, he spends the majority of his

time on issues that are essential to those organizational values. A leader who is successful in creating shared organizational values ensures that all his words, actions, and decisions reflect the core values of the organization. He looks for every opportunity to teach others about those values and uses analogies to help showcase and clarify understanding of the core values. Often overlooked, but critical to true shared organizational values, is the creation of benchmarks and evaluation methods that are in alignment with organizational values.

Effective leaders are also adept at empowering others. Empowerment is not just the transfer of responsibility but also of authority and it requires preparing an employee for his new responsibilities and authority. This preparation includes providing the employee with a clear sense of directions, establishing and communicating the parameters within which he may work, and assisting the employee in forging the relationships he will need to be successful. A good leader will mentor those he has empowered to help ensure their success.

Effective leaders also foster collaboration, which entails seeking collaborative goals, building trust, having respect for others, and using effective listening skills. Collaboration seeks clarity of understanding and requires one to think and to speak in terms of "we" and not "I."

So take a look around. Are your leaders honest, forward-looking, competent, and inspiring? Do they created shared organizational values and align their actions with these values? Have your leaders created an empowering culture and do they foster collaboration? If you can answer yes to these questions, your leader is truly providing a precious gift. ■

The Southwest Florida Community Foundation has been supporting the communities of Lee, Charlotte, Collier, Glades and Hendry through endowed funds for nearly 32 years. With assets of more than \$57 million and over 320 endowed funds, the Community Foundation has provided more than \$30 million in grants and scholarships to the communities it serves.

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	WEEKDAYS	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
3 am			
4 am	BBC World Service	Jazz with Bob Parlocha	Jazz with Bob Parlocha
5 am		BBC World Service	
6 am			BBC World Service
7 am	Morning Edition	The Parent's Journal	
8 am		Calling All Pets	Speaking of Faith
9 am		Weekend Edition	Weekend Edition
10 am	BBC World Service "Newshour"		
11 am	The Diane Rehm Show	Car Talk	Fresh Air Weekend
12 noon	On Point	Wait, Wait Don't Tell Me!	WGCU's Gulf Coast Live Arts Edition <i>encore</i>
1 pm	WGCU Call-in Shows*	The Splendid Table	This American Life <i>encore</i>
2 pm	BBC's World Have Your Say	This American Life	Studio 360
3 pm	Talk of the Nation	Living on Earth	New Letters on the Air Latino USA
4 pm		National Geographic World Talk	A Prairie Home Companion <i>encore</i>
5 pm	All Things Considered	To the Best of Our Knowledge	
6 pm		All Things Considered	All Things Considered
7 pm	Marketplace	A Prairie Home Companion	Car Talk <i>encore</i>
8 pm	Fresh Air	Jazz at Lincoln Center	BBC World Service
9 pm	Various Specials		
10 pm	Jazz with Bob Parlocha (Fridays 11pm-5am) World Café (Fridays only 9-11pm)	Echoes	American Routes
11 pm		Jazz w/Bob Parlocha	Jazz w/Bob Parlocha
-3 am			

*Gulf Coast Live! M-W / Arts Edition Th / Sound Off with Sasha F

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