LEADERS WHO ARE CONTENTED WITH THEIR PROGRESS AND STOP LEARNING WILL NEVER HAVE AN EDGE OVER OTHERS. LEADERS HAVE TO BE HUMBLE AND CONSTANTLY WILLING TO LEARN NEW THINGS TO STAY RELEVANT.

RECIPE OF A GREAT LEADER: 7 INGREDIENTS

LESSONS FROM THE HUNDRED-FOOT JOURNEY

By FOONG SUET LING
sluent.foong@leaderonomics.com

1. A FLUID OF FORGIVENESS
Madame Mallory sabotaged the opening night of the Kadam family’s restaurant by purchasing all the ingredients that were needed for them to cook their signature dishes. As a result, Papa Kadam was furious and vowed to do the same when Madame Mallory had to cook for a minister. However, Hassan did not agree. Instead, he went over to apologise and served a French dish to Madame Mallory as a sign of truce. Hassan chose to forgive rather than retaliate.

2. AN OUNCE OF OWNERSHIP
Things got out of hand when one of Madame Mallory’s chefs hired people to destroy Kadam’s residence with the intention of obliterating their restaurant. Madame Mallory fired the chef immediately and went over to Kadam’s residence to clean the paint on the wall which was vandalised by the thugs.

3. A CHUNK OF CONTINUOUS LEARNING
Even though Hassan was an expert in Indian cuisine, he was constantly curious and committed to learning how to cook French cuisine by reading cookbooks, exploring different cooking techniques and ingredients, and learning from his friend Marguerite, an expert in French cuisine. Hassan’s relentless learning habits bore fruit when he succeeded in mastering the foreign dishes.

4. A DASH OF DEDICATION
Madame Mallory was impressed by Hassan’s culinary skills after tasting the omelette he made with his own recipe and decided to hire him. The setback was Papa Kadam was not keen with the idea and objected.

5. A SPOONFUL OF SELFLESSNESS
Madame Mallory did not stop Hassan from pursuing his dreams to work in Paris after he helped the restaurant win another Michelin star. In fact, she was delighted and informed Tata Kadam previously that working in her restaurant would serve as a stepping stone for Hassan to work in other renowned restaurants.

By acting on the best interests of others, a leader would have gained plenty of faithful followers along the way.

6. A TABLESPOON OF TEAMWORK
When Madame Mallory’s restaurant won a second Michelin star, it was evident that Hassan played the most significant role in achieving that milestone.

However, Hassan was full of humility and credited the success to the team of chefs and said, “We did it!” True leaders will never take absolute credit for all the good work that the team has put together. Leaders who chase after fame at the expense of losing their followers’ trust will have a tough time building their legacy in the long run.

Respect and trust are crucial components to make any type of relationship work, especially a mutually beneficial one.

7. AN INCH OF INNOVATION
Hassan never shied away from using his traditional spices to improvise his cooking as a chef in a French restaurant.

He built a solid foundation in culinary skills, hence he could use whatever experience he had taught him to be innovative and creative with his dishes. This, in turn, earned him three Michelin stars in a short span of time.

Leaders who do not innovate will be in jeopardy of falling behind competitors who dare to take risks and generate outstanding business outcomes.

Being in a comfort zone is no act of a leader. Leaders who are not afraid to venture into uncharted territories have a steeper learning curve and greater courage to lead others to do the same.

Go forth and find your own recipe to be the ultimate leader!