YOUR ULTIMATE LEADERSHIP GUIDE

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THE BEST LEADERS ARE GREAT TEACHERS

FROM SOCRATES TO PLATO TO ARISTOTLE TO ALEXANDER THE GREAT, THESE INDIVIDUALS INSPIRED CHANGE.

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The Teaching Point of View of a Great Leader

Noel Tichy, an American management consultant, author, and educator, as well as a Professor of Management and Organisations at the University of Michigan, is known for his contribution towards General Electric’s worldwide development as he led transformational leadership into action-based learning in the organization.

Tichy talks about why most succession planning in organisations doesn’t work. It is, mostly, in part because those plans often remain as paperwork. Instead, talents should come from within an organisation, after having them go through leadership development programmes that are tailored for them. And somebody (read: the leaders) needs to be teaching and imparting these high potentials the various know-hows!

He shares on The LeadershipShow about the importance of teaching by leaders themselves and how commandments can never work.

The Truth About Teachers and Leaders

By DARSHANA SIVANANTHAM
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TEACHING—one of the oldest professions in the world, if you come to think of it. Imagine going back in time to the Stone Age, where starting a fire would have probably been the most important skillset during a chilling winter. Learning and refining this “specialised” skillset back then surely would’ve come from observing and imitating a fellow caveman. I’m quite certain some teaching of this skill was involved somewhere, albeit without much verbal communication.

One of the greatest teachers who has ever lived was Siddhartha Gautama Buddha, whose teachings on Buddhism reverberate through the entire world today. Buddha, who impressed upon millions the importance of transforming suffering into peace, joy and liberation, demonstrated how teaching with a clear purpose can create a wave of inspired and lasting change.

In today’s era where even YouTube can be a teacher (it’s true, there are enough self-made tutorials online for you to master anything), leaders sometimes question the relevance of teaching in their portfolio. However, there are many reasons why great leaders (who are great teachers) transform and touch lives like no other.

WHY SHOULD LEADERS TEACH?

A simple enough question. Perhaps an easier way to write this question is to find the commonality between teaching and leading. What makes leaders great teachers? Studies have proven that the best teachers behave very much like the best leaders, because both focus on a common factor—transformational behaviour.

Transformational behaviour is one that influences and encourages growth, and motivates great performance. It reveals a culture that allows a person to emulate, understand, reflect and generate something beyond the constraints of the mind—this is what creates great ideas, plans and strategies. A leader who can teach someone to be all of this is indeed a great one.

In an article about the Leaders As Teachers approach, Neal Goodman says, “A key principle behind this approach is that no group of people has greater responsibility to drive the agenda of the organisation than its leaders.”

Here are three reasons why leaders should teach, especially in times when agility and synergy are two keywords every organisation seems to look at.

1. GREAT TEACHERS COMMUNICATE THEIR VISION CLEARLY

I remember my Form 3 History teacher till this day. The way he taught us to understand history was never for the sake of answering exam questions; it was to share his vision in ensuring we understood the relevance of history in present times.

Similarly, when leaders “teach” the company vision clearly and continuously with their people, this creates a strong, synergistic company culture. There is no room for misinterpretation, and an opportunity arises for everyone to learn directly from the leader.

2. GREAT TEACHERS CARE ABOUT MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE

A leader leads because of a deeper reason. Great leaders lead because they are driven to make a real change, to transform lives and rewrite history (as far as visionaries go!).

Great teachers care about making such changes, and are passionate about sharing this drive with everyone they come into contact with. Leaders who put aside time to reiterate their focus and share organisational goals with their people, automatically reinforce their beliefs. This in turn can be the determining factor in motivating and inspiring others, or otherwise.

3. GREAT TEACHERS KNOW THE IMPORTANCE OF PURPOSEFUL WORK

Purpose. A word that ignites a myriad of feelings in anyone who has questioned why they continue to do what they do, be it at work or anywhere else.

A great teacher understands that finding purpose is key to happiness and satisfaction. A leader who invests in teaching others to continuously find purpose in everything they do will have achieved a stupendous feat—allowing for individuals to grow and flourish without restraints, while understanding that purpose is at the heart of great work.

Trust me, this is a feat that isn’t easily achieved in this day and age.

TEACH BY LEADING

For a leader to be a great teacher, the best way to teach is by example. Dolly Parton couldn’t have said it better: “If your actions create a legacy that inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, then, you are an excellent leader.”

I leave you with a question for the weekend to ponder on—how do you teach through your leadership journey? Write in to editor@leaderonomics.com and share your thoughts with us. Happy weekend!

Darshana is a HR media specialist at Leaderonomics. A former PR consultant, photographer, and associate trainer, her career path has been anything but monotonous. Article first published on www.leaderonomics.com.
WANT TO BE A MANAGER

FIVE REASONS WHY YOU MAY WANT TO BE A MANAGER

ADVICE FOR ASPIRING MANAGERS

BY JOSEPH GRENNY

FRENOWED restaurateur Danny Meyer likes to tell newly promoted supervisors that they have just been given the “gift of fire.” As a boss, they now have a new and potent power, but Meyer wants to ensure they understand the appropriate—and inappropriate—uses of this gift. Fire, Meyer explains, can be used to warm and comfort. It can be used to illuminate darkness. It can be used to render food more nutritious and pleasing. When stoked into a campfire, it provides a place for people to congregate. And every once in a while, it is used to scorch—as when a leader attempts to turn you back into a peer. You’re at the new airs you’re putting on in an attempt to turn you back into a peer. You’re not, and you never will be again. Are you okay with that? The ultimate display of confidence is a comfort with truth. Acknowledge your deficiencies without dwelling on them. Then focus on your strengths. If you say yes to becoming a manager, think carefully about why you are saying it.

THE ULTIMATE DISPLAY OF CONFIDENCE IS A COMFORT WITH TRUTH. ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR DEFICIENCIES WITHOUT DWELLING ON THEM. THEN FOCUS ON YOUR STRENGTHS. IF YOU SAY YES TO BECOMING A MANAGER, THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT WHY YOU ARE SAYING IT.

The world is no longer as simple as your opinion—it’s now about our. You will encounter a new set of trade-offs. You don’t get to sit in the cheap seats and blame “management” anymore—because you are now management. You can’t take simple positions like “the customer comes first” because you have to balance cost, quality, schedule and other factors. When you take the job, you leave a world of value simplicity and enter one of value complexity. You will have to advocate positions that you may not totally agree with because you are now a part of a management team. Are you ready for that?

1. TRIBE

When you become the boss, your peers are no longer peers. This might unsettle valued friendships. Also, your new peers may be less to your liking. Examine them closely before moving up to their level.

Likewise, when you are granted more power, you are implicitly agreeing that your loyalty from that day forward is expected to be more to the enterprise than to your colleagues. This may offend your former tribe. For example, if you argue against new ergonomic chairs that you formerly championed—because now you see a better and higher use of the funds—they may see you as a sell-out. Verbally, or nonverbally, they’ll express their disgust at the new airs you’re putting on in an attempt to turn you back into a peer. You’re not, and you never will be again. Are you okay with that?

The extreme case of your tribal loss may be the need to dismiss one of your former peers. Could you? Would you? Would you dress them down if needed in order to uphold the interests of the enterprise? Would you give one of them an unattractive assignment if that’s what the team needed done? Try the job on. Try to imagine the crucial moments you will face that may require setting new expectations and social contracts with previous peers. Are you willing to fully embrace the requirements of this new authority?

2. SIMPLICITY

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“management” anymore—because you are now management. You can’t take simple positions like “the customer comes first” because you have to balance cost, quality, schedule and other factors. When you take the job, you leave a world of value simplicity and enter one of value complexity. You will have to advocate positions that you may not totally agree with because you are now a part of a management team. Are you ready for that?

4. TAKE COUNSEL FROM YOUR FEARS

Fear is normal. If you aren’t scared, you shouldn’t be trusted with fire. You’ve got two options for dealing with those jitters—you can cover for them or connect with them. Faking confidence doesn’t work. If you’re worried about failure or criticism, that’s normal. Authenticity—first with yourself and then with others—is the path to legitimate serenity. For example, if you’re being asked to lead a team of engineers—most of whom are smarter than you—the worst thing you can do is cover for your fear with some supercilious display of your wisdom.

The ultimate display of confidence is a comfort with truth. Acknowledge your deficiencies without dwelling on them. Then focus on your strengths.

5. CHECK YOUR MOTIVE

If you say yes to becoming a manager, think carefully about why you are saying it. Is your primary motive ambition or contribution? Is it about looking good or doing good?

If you want power to gratify your ambition, your leadership will be all about you. You’ll fail to cultivate the legitimate trust of your team. You’ll guard your power jealously rather than being generous with it. You’ll obsess over others respecting you rather than doing the right thing. And all of that will hobble your capacity to be bold and decisive. Meyer says that the gift of fire isn’t “power over” it is “power to.” The organisation is willing to grant it to you if your intent is to be a steward, not a monarch.

Leadership offers profound satisfactions—but only if embraced fully, willingly and for the right reasons.

Joseph Grenny is a renowned author, keynote speaker and social scientist for business performance. His passion and expertise is human behaviour and its impact on business performance and relationships. To know more about being an engaging leader, check out our leadership articles on www.leaderonomics.com or drop us an e-mail at editor@leaderonomics.com.

This article is available at www.leaderonomics.com, where you can download the PDF version.
Leadership: Building the Business,” which was a class and started teaching his “teachable point of view.”

A teachable point of view is seen through underlying assumptions about themselves, their expertise. Once leaders have clarity on their teachable point of view, they start to create stories around them. Tichy adds that these stories create a core for changing, a vision of where the organisation is going, and an understanding of how to get there. Once leaders have a story, they take bold actions that bring about massive and lasting change.

In another one of his books, The Cycle of Leadership, Tichy writes, “the very act of crafting a Teachable Point of View makes people better leaders—... they come to understand their underlying assumptions about themselves, their organisations and business in general.”

So, how do you create your teachable point of view?

A teachable point of view is seen through the stories leaders create to define themselves, their values, their vision for tomorrow and their expectations.

And now, I retrieved Leo Lung Nhan of Cebu Pacific and Dato’ Sri Syed Hamid Albar of DRB-HICOM Group teaching their leaders.

According to Tichy, “...crafting a teachable point of view is an artful task. It requires significant reflection, i.e. to look back into your life and compare the dots. As you connect the dots from your past and what clarity you have on your teachable point of view, you start having clarity on your leadership behaviour.”

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Creating your Teachable Point of View

The process involves:

1. Identifying your teachable point of view.
2. Articulating your teachable point of view.
3. Practicing your teachable point of view.

During our recent interview, Tichy mentioned that these three steps are necessary for leaders to have a teachable point of view.

In the leader’s opinion, on how to make the organisation successful, the leaders need to have a teachable point of view. Every leader must have a teachable point of view.

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Tichy also added, “It’s important for leaders to have a teachable point of view. A teachable point of view helps leaders to identify what they want to achieve and how they can achieve it. It also makes them more confident in their decision-making process.

Leadership: Building the Business, a book by Noel Tichy, is a must-read for anyone interested in leadership development. It provides valuable insights into the art of crafting a teachable point of view and teaches leaders how to develop a leadership style that is effective and inspiring.

The late Datuk Dr Mohd Fowzi Bin Hj Razi

The late Datuk Dr Mohd Fowzi Bin Hj Razi...
The myASEANinternship programme is back, bigger and better than ever! Having its successful debut last year which saw over 40 of the region’s brightest youths embarking on once-in-a-lifetime internships with 24 ‘ASEAN champions’ including AirAsia, Axiata, Maybank, Nestlé and General Electric. In April 2016, MITI announced it would be joining the myASEANinternship programme as an employer. MITI has also committed to hire a Malaysian intern. The myASEANinternship programme has not only branded Axiata as a potential employer among ASEAN youth, but has also helped to cement its culture early across the ASEAN countries it operates in. New myASEANinternship spots were sent out to Axiata offices in ASEAN, including Cambodia (Smart Axiata), Indonesia (XL Axiata) and Malaysia.

For 2016, the programme will help key employers fill a total of 100 internship spots in vibrant ASEAN cities, including Bangkok, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, and Manila – home to some of the region’s most exciting industry and development opportunities.

The myASEANinternship programme was the greatest turning point in 2015 for me. The positive work environment at General Electric Malaysia and its inspiring, friendly people helped me to adapt to the company culture and explore beyond my comfort zone.”

MOHD YUSOF KHAMIS, Group Chief Talent Officer Axiata Group

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“Through myASEANinternship, I was fortunate to have good mentors who guided me both personally and professionally.”

CHARLES NG TAN JIN, Graduate of Universiti Utara Malaysia

“Working in four amazing capital cities in South-East Asia – Bangkok, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, and Manila – has broadened my horizons and helped me understand my company better.”

DRITIA HASNA KARIMA, Graduate of Taylor’s University, Malaysia

In 2015, 40 students interned across ASEAN in six countries and have benefited from skills acquisition, cultural exchanges and competitive packages. For 2016, myASEANinternship aims to bring this opportunity to more than 100 students.

For more information or to apply, visit www.talentcorp.com.my/myaseaninternship

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By PREETHIBA ESVARY
editor@leaderonomics.com

Q: Giving — If happiness was the national currency, what kind of work would make you rich?
A: I had the honour of meeting Professor Muhammad Yunus, who founded the Grameen Bank—a microcredit organisation for the poor in Bangladesh—and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006. This is a man who does microfinancing and deals with the poorest of the poor. It can be quite exhausting. And yet when you meet him, he is just a ridiculously happy man. I asked him, “How do you do that? Is it because of your career in a social enterprise?” Do you achieve that because you are working with non-profits? His response was: “It hasn’t got anything to do with that. Making money is happiness, but helping other people is super-happiness.” So, my answer would be, in any career, where you’re able to genuinely help others.

Q: Relationships — if you could offer a new-born child only one piece of advice, what would it be?
A: I’ll say “live in the moment,” because the moment is all that we have. Don’t spend so much time thinking about the past, or worrying about the future. Just cherish the moment.

THERE was a young boy named Joshua Williams who became a minister at the age of 11. When he was four, on his way to church with his mum one day, Williams decided to give the $20 (RM80) that his grandmother had given him for his birthday to a homeless man on the street.

A year after this took place, Williams became quite possibly the world’s youngest foundation president of Joshua’s Heart Foundation. What started out as leading a group of volunteers to hand out food to the needy, grew to an entity that serves to end world hunger and poverty. In an interview, Williams said, “I believe that giving your time and money is happiness because through time you will see who you are helping and the impact you had...”

This story goes to show that “we are never too young to make a difference, and we don’t need to be a billionaire to give in a structured way.” This is a quote by author of The Giving Way To Happiness: Stories and Science Behind the Life-Changing Power of Giving, Jenny Santi, a philanthropy adviser. Born and bred in Manila, Santi observed a combination of poverty and prosperity and this sparked an interest to do something that would allow her to make a difference.

Currently based in New York, Santi now advises some of the world’s most generous philanthropists and celebrity activists to help them channel their wealth, power and influence towards social good. It is a role which requires her to act as a strategy consultant, family adviser, personal career counsellor, connector and event planner.

GIVE TO RECEIVE
At Leaderonomics, one of our cultural values lies in giving. We believe that it is through serving people passionately and generously that we will be able to impact the communities around us, and ultimately transform the nation.

The chief executive officer (CEO) of Leaderonomics, once wrote in an article about someone who once told him this: “...giving could only happen after we ‘get’ —companies need to focus on ‘getting’ revenue and profits before focusing on corporate social responsibility and ‘giving’ to the community...”

My CEO however disagrees. In the same article, he said, “...if you study the lives of great leaders, you will find that each and every one of them have cultivated a habit of giving in their organisations. Roger Enrico gave by teaching at PepsiCo. Other organisations, like Google, foster environments where each employee helps others and this enables effective collaboration, which results in innovation.”

In fact, in Santi’s book, Indian-American author Deepak Chopra wrote, “The more you give, the more you will receive, because you will keep the abundance of the universe circulating in your life.”

This statement is supported by the concept of the entire book which is that we give, not only because we want to help others, but to also receive something in return, which is fulfillment and happiness.

GIVING AS A WORKING PROFESSIONAL
When the term “giving” is brought up, society immediately thinks of charities or non-governmental organisations. There is a chapter in Santi’s book, From Career to Calling. One of the things spoken about in this chapter is the trend these days among young people, or mid-career professionals, or even retired individuals, who are looking for ways to find more fulfillment.

Santi says, “I get so many people coming to me and saying, ‘I’d like to transition from for-profit to non-profit because I find no meaning in my career. But, you ask me about the workplace setting, I don’t think we need to leave our careers. Because even within that setting, there are so many things we can do to find fulfillment...’”

She mentioned that giving includes the act of mentoring a fellow colleague or subordinate, or helping the person sitting next to you, or sitting on a board of charity that you care about, or volunteering—giving your time to one person who needs your help, or to a huge organisation that you care about.

The key thing to note is to always give in a way that reflects your passion. Once you achieve this, you and/or your organisation (be it a social enterprise or a non-profit organisation) will be able to achieve sustainability.

Santi says, “Find your passion and make that the foundation of your giving. It’s not about how much you give, but how much love you put into your giving.”

TAKEAWAY FROM THE BOOK
In the process of researching and writing her book, Santi met with and interviewed a host of leaders and experts in their respective fields who went on to become philanthropists such as Academy Award winner Goldie Hawn, founder of one of Africa’s most successful companies Mo Ibrahim, and Nobel Peace Prize winner Professor Muhammad Yunus. When asked about what are her key takeaways from having spoken to these individuals, Santi said, “...don’t get peer pressured into giving. Don’t do something just because others are doing it...”

Here are some questions you ought to ask yourself before you give: 1. Is this aligned with my passion? 2. Does this reflect something I myself went through? 3. Does this reflect the best way I can use my resources and interests?

PARTING THOUGHTS
Santi’s book provides you with a different perspective of giving. Instead of looking at how much the receiver gets, she shows you just how much you, as a giver, are able to receive through the act of giving.

Her passion for philanthropy is evident throughout the interview, and you will find yourself feeling inspired as you flip through the pages of her book and as you delve into the eye-opening tales of individuals who found their higher purpose in life.

Jenny Santi was in Malaysia on the 25th of April to give a talk on “Significance beyond success: channeling wealth, power and influence towards social good” at the Private Wealth Management APAC Summit 2016, held at Hilton Kuala Lumpur.

If you have any burning questions for Jenny, e-mail us at editor@leaderonomics.com.
WHAT UNIVERSITY DID NOT TEACH ME

By LIM KWAN-LYN
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O

paper, my degree could not have been more suited for the role. Having spent four years earning a Bachelor of Management Studies (Honours), with a double major in Finance and Marketing, I had developed a solid foundation in the areas of management — and topped this up with a good dose of financial understanding and insight into customers. I added trimmings too, holding down part-time jobs and volunteering throughout university life. Like many management trainee programmes, my role was structured as four-month-long rotations over a two-year period. This was one of the main attractions for me, as variety has always appealed to me. I was, like half the people in their early twenties out there, still searching for what I wanted to do in life. I soon came to question my capabilities, that maybe, my personality wasn’t best suited for the role.

You see, one of the main highlights of programmes of this nature is that it can fast-track your learning and development within the organisation. But in order to do so, you need to be someone who grasps the spotlight, i.e. you need to demonstrate yourself as someone who can take initiatives, is sociable and is able to add value. Even though I love people, I am naturally reserved and better at interacting in smaller groups of people. I enjoy coming up with ideas, but prefer listening and understanding the situation before rushing to offer my opinion. Looking back, I probably came across as someone quiet (my small stature in a city where Asians are a minority did not help), someone who does a decent job but nothing more. I did not feel like I was shining, nor was I demonstrating all I had to offer. I’m grateful to say that all was not lost and I met some great managers and mentors along the early years of my career. With their help and guidance, I learnt to tailor my approach to different people, to help them see the benefit of completing my work requests or sometimes, simply ask for help from a mentor or manager.

PERSONAL BRANDING
This one is that really stuck me when I first heard about it at a graduate development session with the human resources team. During this session, I learnt that personal branding is how others perceive the value of work you are able to consistently deliver.

When you are part of a large organisation in particular, first impressions really count, and bad impressions spread. In other words, if you do a bad job, not only are you setting a bad impression with the colleague you were working with, but potentially with other people who speak to the colleague later on.

Another honest piece of advice I was given was to learn how to command attention. Naturally, a tall, athletic male (for example, Harvey Specter from the hit television show Suits) with a booming voice is able to command the attention of everyone in a meeting. People will, naturally, listen and feel like they need to abide by his requests. Whatever he says sounds credible because it is backed with natural confidence.

Someone who may not have those tools can learn to make up for it by being extra prepared for the meeting and by doing your research. Over time, people will notice that what you have to contribute is valuable and your personal brand will solidify over time.

SURVIVING WORKPLACE CHANGE
This was one of the toughest lessons that spanned nearly five years. Starting out at the bank, I was full of hope and optimism. But by the end of the two-year programme, unexpected events at work — as a result of workplace change — came flying my way, often not within my own control or the control of my managers.

I experienced first-hand the aftermath of restructuring, miscommunication, and organisational silos. While I was able to overcome each of them, it perpetually put me under a stressful and tiring time. After a few years of having empty promises and unsubstantiated reasons thrown at me, I couldn’t help but feel a build of resentment towards the organisation.

The turning point came one sunny day, when I made some life-changing decisions. Instead of bottling up my frus-
tations, I shared it with my director and even sought out her advice on what she would do if she were in my shoes.

Rather than letting negative feelings take over, I chose to focus on what I could be thankful for each day. And just like that, work got better. My expectations were better managed, there was a newfound transparency between myself and the organisation and doors started to open.

I learnt to stand up for myself, and it taught me the importance of finding opportunities during a time of change, rather than to get caught up in all the negativity and noise. I learnt that the first and most important step of surviving issues at the workplace begins with a positive mind.

WHERE I AM TODAY
Staring at my screen with my fingers typing away at my keyboard, I am writing this article as part of my sixth job out of university. I have grown, I am still excited, hopeful but more empowered. I’m not one who regrets the things I’ve done, but there have been times when I secretly wished I had learnt the importance of some of these areas that my university did not teach me earlier on. It would have saved me unwanted stress, dissatisfaction and tears, and made me a better employee.
OLD DOG, NEW TRICKS

EVE WAKE UP AND WONDER, “HOW IS THIS MY LIFE?” “HOW DID I GET HERE?” “IS THIS WHERE I WANT TO BE?” CUE: EXISTENTIAL CRISIS!

You can’t be happy and be on the up-and-up all the time, but most of the time: Are you happy with your goals and vision? Do you still know why you are doing whatever it is you are doing?

IF YOUR ANSWER IS ‘NO AND NO’

“1 have not failed. I’ve just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.” —Thomas A. Edison

First, reflect on your experiences and what you have learned. You have probably learnt a lot more than you have given yourself credit for. This self-awareness is necessary to give you the confidence you need to start making fresh strides.

Next, talk to people who know you well. Be open and receptive to what they say. They might have some insight into yourself that you might have missed.

I once asked my best friend what she felt I would thrive in and she said human resource management. It came as a surprise to me but as I thought about it, I realised she was on to something. It inspired the track I am on and since that talk, I have had more clarity about my goals than I ever did before.

Lastly, do your homework. Learn what’s required to move to a new direction and what sacrifices need to be made. You do not have to do a 180-degree turn—just start with baby steps. Find a night class or just commit a certain amount of time weekly to your new direction.

BECOMING YOUR OWN LEADER

We all feel a little bit lost at certain points in our lives but the main thing is to never wallow; do something. You are already achieving something and becoming stronger by moving forward with your life. Yes, you will make mistakes and doubt yourself a few more times but keep asking questions. Stay vigilant at what is around you and the answers will present themselves. When they do, act on them.

Remember, successfully moving in a new direction or even just moving forward is a big responsibility, but never believe you have to do it alone. Incorporate your goals into your current job and find opportunities to collaborate with people who are doing what you want to be doing. It’s a smart way to get a taste of something new and if your company has jobs related to your new direction, you can start aligning yourself to become an asset to that department.

“The key to happiness is having dreams; the key to success is making them come true.” —James Allen

IN SHORT

It’s never too late. Every stage of our lives brings new opportunities and lessons. The truth is we don’t suddenly become stunted at a certain age. We are always growing and figuring things out so take it easy. We’re in this together.

FREE LEADERSHIP WORKSHOPS

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8 Powerful Ways to Mould Your Children into Leaders

By TRAVIS BRADBERRY
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W e all want our children to become leaders. Whether they spend the bulk of their days in the mailroom or at the corner of the office, we want our children to grow to be courageous, passionate and authentic. We want their actions to inspire other people to be their best, to get more out of life than they ever thought possible.

As parents and caretakers of children, their path to leadership is in our hands. We can model and teach the skills that will equip them to lead themselves and others in this hypercompetitive world, or we can allow them to fail victim to the kind of thinking that makes them slaves to the status quo.

It’s a big responsibility—but when isn’t being a parent a massive responsibility?

The beauty of building children into leaders is that it’s the little things we do every day that mould them into the people they’ll become. Focus on the eight actions below, and you’ll build leadership in your children and yourself.

#1 Model Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

Emotional intelligence is that “something” in each of us that is a bit intangible; it affects how we manage behaviour, navigate social complexities, and make personal decisions that achieve positive results.

Children learn emotional intelligence from their parents, plain and simple. As your children watch you every day, they absorb your behaviour like a sponge. Children are particularly attuned to your awareness of emotions, the behaviour you demonstrate in response to strong emotions, and how you react and respond to their emotions.

#2 Don’t Obsess about Achievement

Parents get sucked into obsessing about achievement because they believe that this will turn their children into high achievers. Instead, focusing on achievement creates all sorts of problems for kids. This is especially true when it comes to leadership, where focusing on individual achievement gives kids the wrong idea about how work gets done.

Simply put, the best leaders surround themselves with great people because they know they can’t do it alone. Achievement-oriented children are so focused on awards and outcomes that they never fully understand this. All they can see is the player who’s handed the MVP (Most Valuable Player) trophy and the celebrity chief executive officer who makes the news—they assume it’s all about the individual. It’s a rude awakening once they discover how real life works.

#3 Don’t Praise Too Much

Children need praise to build a healthy sense of self-esteem. Unfortunately, piling on the praise doesn’t give them extra self-esteem. Children need to believe in themselves and develop self-confidence required to become successful leaders, but if you gush every time they put pen to paper or kick a ball (the “everyone gets a trophy” mentality), this creates confusion and false confidence. Always show your children how proud you are of their passion and effort; just don’t paint them as superstars when you know it isn’t true.

#4 Allow Them to Experience Risk and Failure

Success in business and in life is driven by risk. When parents go overboard protecting their children, they don’t allow them to take risks and reap the consequences. When you aren’t allowed to fail, you don’t understand risk. A leader can’t take appropriate risks until he or she knows the bitter taste of failure that comes with risking it all and coming up short.

The road to success is paved with failure. When you try to shield your children from failure in order to boost their self-esteem, they have trouble tolerating the failure required to succeed as a leader. Don’t rub their face in it either. Children need your support when they fail. They need to know you care. They need to know that you know how much failure stings. Your support allows them to embrace the intensity of the experience and to know that they’ll make it through it all right. That, right there, is solid character building for future leaders.

#5 Say ‘No’

Overindulging children is a sure-fire way to limit their development as leaders. To succeed as a leader, one must be able to delay gratification and work hard for things that are really important. Children need to develop the patience. They need to set goals and experience the joy that comes with working diligently towards them.

Saying “no” to your children will disappoint them momentarily, but they’ll get over that. They’ll never get over being spoilt.

#6 Let Children Solve Their Own Problems

There’s a certain self-sufficiency that comes with being a leader. When you’re the one making the calls, you should also be the one who needs to stay behind and clean up the mess they create. When parents constantly solve their children’s problems for them, children never develop the critical ability to stand on their own two feet. Children who always have someone swooping in to rescue them and clean up their mess never learn the importance of the consequences. When children look up to aren’t infallible. Leaders need to know that the people they look up to aren’t perfect, but they earn people’s respect by walking their talk. Your children need to develop this quality naturally, but only if it’s something they see you demonstrate. To be authentic, you must be honest in all things—not just in what you say and do but also in who you are. When you walk your talk, your words and actions will align with who you claim to be. Your children will see this and aspire to do the same.

#8 Show That You’re Human

No matter how indignant and defiant your children are at any moment, you’re still their hero and their model for the future. This can make you want to hide your past mistakes for fear that they’ll be enticed to repeat them. The opposite is true. When you don’t show any vulnerability, your children develop intense guilt about every failure because they believe that they’re the only ones to make such terrible mistakes.

To develop as leaders, children need to know that the people they look up to aren’t infallible. Leaders must be able to process their mistakes, learn from them and move forward to be better people. Children can’t do this when they’re overcome by guilt. Instead, they need someone—a real, vulnerable person—to teach them how to process mistakes and learn from them. When you show them how you’ve done this in the past, you’re doing just that.

Bringing it All Together

We can mould our children into leaders, but only if we work at it. Few things in life are as worth your time and effort as this.

Travis Bradberry is the award-winning co-author of Emotional Intelligence 2.0, and co-founder of the world’s leading provider of emotional intelligence tests and training. His bestselling books have been translated into 25 languages and are available in more than 150 countries. To read more articles from Travis, log on to www.leaderonomics.com.
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A CHANCE TO ELEVATE YOUR VISIBILITY AND CREDIBILITY

IN today's corporate setting, where competition is high and potential employees are more selective of their career and workplace choices, the credibility and standards upheld by an individual or company have become more pertinent than ever. Thus, when organisations receive an award or some form of recognition for their products, services or practices, not only do they stand out from competitors, but their stakeholders will see more value in them. This is the basis of the inception of the Malaysian Institute of Human Resource Management (MIHRM) Malaysia HR Awards. With an aim to recognise the standards of human resources (HR) in Malaysia, the awards also serve as an opportunity for entities to benchmark themselves against the best. Here are what some past winners had to say:

"It brings pride to the employees and top talents will want to join your company. I would encourage companies to participate because you also learn about the best HR practices. - Kenny Dai, senior vice-president of HR at U.S.C. Boral Malaysia"

"Our clients recognise our efforts and have benefited through the improved services given by our people. - Datuk Sariah Fauziah Jamaluddin, vice-president II of group talent management, KPI Healthcare Berhad"

"We are happy with the recognition that our leaders are no longer just passive observers but are teachers as well. - KRI – Grand award winner, Employer of Choice (2015)"

In 2015, the awards saw an increase in company participation from 26 to 40 and this year, the number of registered companies so far stands at 46, with limited spaces left. So, hurry and register before the closing date on June 30! The Malaysia HR Awards this year will be taking place on Oct 27. All applications must be made on the official participation form available from the MIHRM Secretariat Office. For further information, visit www.mihrm.com or call +603-7955 6538 (MIHRM Office) or +603 224 7085 (Alexsandran).