



LEAD Parent Program

Leadership Education & Advocacy Development
Empowered Parents: Educated, Engaged, Effective!

Setting the Stage for Successful Leadership

Knowing the difference between thoughtful leadership and the kind that happens seemingly by accident is critical—not only in your ability to grow and develop as a leader, but to establish a pattern of success that's deliberate, and not miraculous.

Below are eight attributes that separate genuine leadership from leadership that's more a matter of chance:

1. Real leadership means leading yourself. Passing out orders is as easy as passing out business cards. But a prudent leader also knows how to lead himself or herself—not merely to provide a genuine example to others, but to become a working element of the overall machinery of your business. It's important that leaders have the ability to focus and motivate themselves as they motivate others.

2. Don't be a monarch. Thoughtful leadership likely means you already have a talented work force in place. That's terrific. But be careful not to set up a throne room in the process. Accidental leaders often inadvertently establish a system of guidance that's unnecessarily restrictive. Guide people, but don't implement more parameters than are absolutely necessary. "It's important to influence the people with whom you work/partner with. Don't see your position/organization as a hierarchy.

3. Be open to new ways of doing things. One potential land mine of a prosperous operation is to repeat anything that proves successful. It's hard to argue against that, but an inadvertent leader will put far too much stock in sticking with what always works. By contrast, thoughtful leadership acknowledges success but also recognizes there are always ways to do things better.

5. Establish a genuine sense of commitment. Establish how to quantify excellence, design a cogent plan to achieve it, and set a reasonable but real timetable for its completion.

6. Finish the job. A thoughtless leader who never genuinely finishes anything loses the confidence of clients and followers. Set goals and establish pragmatic, accountable measures to actually finish what you start. The ability to complete things is critical, because families depend on follow up and follow through. Nothing's useful unless you actually complete it.

7. Show genuine appreciation. Thoughtless leaders must have forearms like Popeye's, what with all the back-slapping they do. That's fine, but good performance requires a more substantive response. Leaders with an eye to the future hand out praise. That motivates people, not only to get involved, but stay involved and apply themselves with enthusiasm.

8. Know that leadership skills come from learning. Far too many people believe leadership skills stem from some sort of wondrous epiphany or other such flash of insight. Sure, great ideas can come to any of us, but being a bona fide leader also means study. Read books on effective leadership, attend seminars, and pick the brains of colleagues to see what works for them. It can be a long education, but one with rewards that multiply with the more knowledge you have under your belt.

How to Deal with Anxiety

Everyone gets nervous when speaking to a group or taking on a new challenge: Acknowledge your anxiety, tell yourself you can do it, than just do it!

- Be prepared! Rehearse! Don't wait until the last minute to prep for a meeting/presentation.
- Organize what you would like to say: have your main points written on note cards.
- Speak from your heart: use your own personal experiences (brief examples)
- Take a long, deep breath: Research shows it really does work!