
Enlightened Leadership

ENLIGHTENED LEADERSHIP

by Kathleen Gage

For many people in a leadership role their primary concern may be to know if they are being effective as a leader. There are a number of ways to lead. One is through force with little, if any, loyalty from those they lead. Then there is the enlightened approach to leadership with the result being commitment and dedication from their team.

Although your position as a CEO, director, manager, supervisor, committee chair or president of a board of directors gives you the authority to accomplish certain tasks and objectives in the organization, this authority does not make you a leader, it only makes you the boss. Leadership is about people having the desire to achieve high goals and objectives, where a boss simply tells people what to do with no desire to achieve any more than the task at hand.

A good leader has a purpose and a mission. In order to stay on track as a leader it is important to determine what your most important goals are both personally and professionally. To understand your goals you must have an understanding of your life purpose which ties into your values and principles. It is very difficult to lead if the group you are heading have values and beliefs that are in direct conflict with yours.

An enlightened leader also understands the importance of acknowledging those who

contribute to their success. A good leader cannot do it alone. Those who believe they do will be in for a rude awakening. In the past leadership may have been about being the only one to have a say and take a lot of the credit. Today, it is very different if one truly wants results from their team. It is important to acknowledge and reward everyone in your group.

A good leader is willing to put people first and go to bat for their team. They model self-responsibility. In other words, they walk their talk. They also have very high expectations for results. They have a vision and will encourage others to work towards that vision. The sign of a truly great leader is one who has the ability to get everyone on the same page. Others are excited about the vision of the leader because they understand the overall benefit to everyone concerned.

Another sign of a good leader is they can let go of the need to have their ego stroked through releasing the need for strict control and always being right. People willingly follow a good leader, they don't have to be forced. The enlightened leader is willing to share power and control.

Some of the key awarenesses that a leader operates from is that the most important factor in the organization's success is its people. They also understand their behavior has a major impact on their team which goes back to walking their talk. If the leader says one thing and does another, people will lose faith in this person's ability to lead. On the other hand, when a leader lives by their values and

beliefs, even if it goes against popular opinion, people tend to respect that.

A good leader also understands that when people truly feel cared about and supported they will do most anything for their leader. It is about nurturing others. People do not necessarily resist change, they resist being changed.

A leader focuses on a number of important factors. One is the unique contribution of each member of the team. Secondly, on measuring success and letting other team members know what the measures of success are. Third, on the entire experience. It is not just about the end result, it is about the entire process leading up to the outcome.

The bottom line is that great leadership is about the desire to create a better environment for all concerned.

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