

Career Management Digest

Leadership

Welcome to 2017! This issue of Career Management Digest is focused on different aspects of leadership. *Www.dictionary.com* defines leadership as "1. the position or function of a leader, a person who guides or directs a group; 2. the ability to lead; 3. an act or instance of leading, guiding or direction; 4. the leaders of a group." This month's content will give you some thoughts and insight on all of those examples. Are you a leader? How do you show those leadership qualities?

Leadership Lessons From The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was a visionary leader who changed American culture forever. Here are a few of the leadership standards he lived by:

1. Have Total Commitment to Your Cause King was a visionary, a man who had a dream bigger than the times in which he lived. His "I Have a Dream" speech brought awareness and humanity to the national consciousness about civil rights in America.

His stance on political activism in a non-violent way made him a natural leader and an inspirational figure. He led a social movement of equality during a time when he wasn't supported by most. In fact, he was threatened and despised by many. But he stayed committed to the

vision he held. He felt strongly that violence, even for their cause, was not just.

2. Disrupting the Status Quo is Essential for Change

King is honored and revered today, but he wasn't embraced by society during his short life. However, he knew that his dream of equality was more important than the status quo. His actions backed his vision and he shook up the popular culture of the time. Sometimes doing things completely different is what's necessary for evolution and innovation. The same way of thinking always yields the same results. King never accepted that just because things were a certain way, it made them the right way.

3. Have A Dream ... Then Communicate it and do it

"I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation," spoke King as he began his address at the Washington Monument. Those were tall words for a leader to proclaim across an audience of over 250,000 people. But he had a dream and he couldn't be silent about it.

Dreaming without doing is for childhood. Real leaders have big dreams, take big steps to communicate them, and then they go take big actions! King's actions made him one of the great leaders of the 20th century, Time Magazine's "Man of the Year" in 1963 and a Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1964. His life can inspire us all to turn our dreaming into doing.

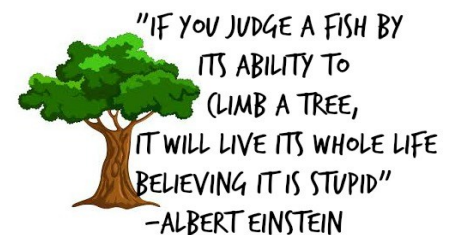
Adam Toren, co-founder of YoungEntrepreneur.com.

~edited by Bonnie Vanecek, Customer Service Specialist, Goodhue County.

CMD committee member Bonnie Vanecek attended a Martin Luther King Day program a few years ago and wanted to share the impactful words of this respected leader.

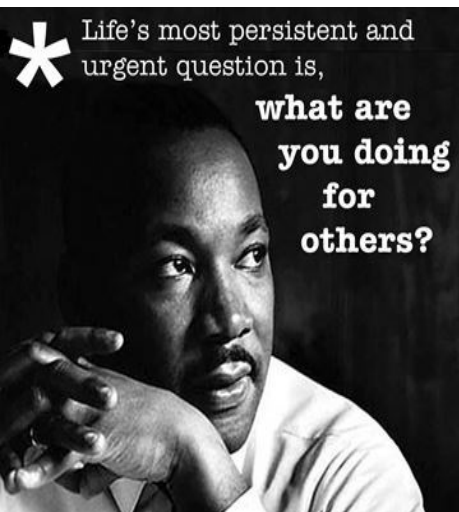
Strengths-Based Leadership

You have probably heard the famous quote from Albert Einstein...



Ever really thought about it? Those moments when you are trying to accomplish something but can't seem to get it right or are not motivated to do it? Those are the moments when you are not utilizing your natural strengths. Strengths-based leadership is a concept where you support the natural talents and strengths of your colleagues, peers, and those you supervise, by allowing them to work primarily on things that use their strengths. Start exploring/using your strengths and the strengths of those around you and see what happens!

~Amy Lofquist, Career Counselor, Steele Co.



Leading By Example

When the January 2017 topic of "Leadership" was selected, the different leaders I have worked with in the past came to mind. I've had managers/leaders who gave direction and then went back into their office, not to be seen again all day. Some leaders chose to ignore employees who had no regard for corporate policies and practices. I've worked with leaders who literally had the expression, "Give a horse their head"—which meant that once we knew our job responsibilities, we were allowed to design our own work plan and as long as we checked in and had our plan approved, we did our job. I've also had managers who were right there in the middle with me asking how they could help and pitching in. As you can tell, some led by example and others didn't.

In doing research, several articles provided me with good information on leading by example. If you are a manager, you have a responsibility to all employees to offer guidance and strength, lead by your own actions, behaviors and words. If you are a co-worker, I believe the same goes for you. Some suggestions for all members of a team:

Be a good listener. When a co-worker wants to talk, truly listen. There's a difference between gossip and conversation. Recognize that. Steer away from gossip and move the conversation to the issue at hand. Some good open-ended questions might be "What is the situation?" "What do you need from me?" (Perhaps they just want to be heard and don't really need a response.) "How can I help?"

Everyone needs to follow the rules and policies of a work environment. Don't think the rules apply "to the other people".

Set a standard of excellence for yourself. Striving to do your best every day is never wrong. You aren't responsible for the standards that others work under (unless you are the boss!) but see what you can do to help others achieve more.

Do what you say you will. If you agree to schedule the next team meeting and bring agenda items to the meeting, then do so. Schedule the time and place and ask for agenda items. Make sure everyone is asked and is aware of the details.

See the value in everyone and encourage teamwork. We don't have to always be best friends with our co-workers, but we do need to respect them. Everyone has something to offer or else they wouldn't be there. Seek out their expertise. If the project or responsibility is large, ask for help.

Acknowledge a job well done. Did your co-worker recently attend a training? Ask them to share key points with you. Did your co-worker recently complete a big project? Acknowledge that with a note or a brief stop by their workspace to congratulate them.

With these simple actions or behaviors, anyone can lead by example.

~Valerie Kvale, Placement Specialist, Workforce Development, Inc., Freeborn County

LEADERSHIP --- Keep It Simple

It's important to recognize the leadership that can be found within YOU. You have already accepted the opportunity to lead in many aspects of your life, including: present relationships, family and friends, community associations and school or workplace.

You have had leaders in your life who you remember and have admired: your parents, teachers, coaches and mentors and others whom have had significant influence on your life.

Along with leadership comes responsibility. In all aspects of your life, when you have stepped up and accepted "leadership" at work, within your family, community or your faith-based family, you have agreed to assumed responsibility. There are many people around you – looking up to YOU – believing in YOU - as a role model and a leader.

Never underestimate the influence you have on the lives of others. Accept that you are already a leader in ways that you may not be fully aware of; a more quiet influence.

Hold on to this thought and Lead By Example. The ability we have to make our world better starts with how we live our life and the example we set for others. Leadership means listening; nothing will enhance your reputation as a leader more than being willing to listen. Great leaders are motivated by purposes larger than self-interest. And finally, leaders prepare others to assume their roles.

(Intellectual Property and Credit for these thoughts to author and speaker – Robert Stuberger – "The 12 Secrets: Creating Your Ultimate Destiny")

~ Ed Duda, Career Counselor, Workforce Development, Inc., Olmsted County

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