

7 Personality Traits of a Great Leader

The Qualities of Skillful Leadership

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If you want to be a leader who attracts quality people, the key is to become a person of quality yourself. Leadership is the ability to attract someone to the gifts, skills and opportunities you offer as an owner, as a manager, as a parent. Jim Rohn calls leadership the great challenge of life.

What's important in leadership is refining your skills. All great leaders keep working on themselves until they become effective. Here's how:

1. Learn to Be Strong but Not Impolite.

It is an extra step you must take to become a powerful, capable leader with a wide range of reach. Some people mistake rudeness for strength. It's not even a good substitute.

2. Learn to Be Kind but Not Weak.

We must not mistake weakness for kindness. Kindness isn't weak. Kindness is a certain type of strength. We must be kind enough to tell someone the truth. We must be kind enough and considerate enough to lay it on the line. We must be kind enough to tell it like it is and not deal in delusion.

3. Learn to Be Bold but Not a Bully.

It takes boldness to win the day. To build your influence, you've got to walk in front of your group. You've got to be willing to take the first arrow, tackle the first problem, discover the first sign of trouble. Like the farmer, if you want any rewards at harvest time, you have got to be bold and face the weeds and the rain and the bugs straight on. You've got to seize the moment.

4. Learn to Be Humble but Not Timid.

You can't get to the high life by being timid. Some people mistake timidity for humility. But humility is a virtue; timidity is a disease. It's an affliction. It can be cured, but it is a problem. Humility is almost a God-like word – a sense of awe, a sense of wonder, an awareness of the human soul and spirit, an understanding that there is something unique about the human drama versus the rest of life. Humility is a grasp of the distance between us and the stars, yet having the feeling that we're part of the stars.

5. Learn to Be Proud but Not Arrogant.

It takes pride to build your ambitions. It takes pride in your community. It takes pride in a cause, in accomplishment. But the key to becoming a good leader is to be proud without being arrogant. Do you know the worst kind of arrogance? Arrogance from ignorance. It's intolerable. If someone is smart and arrogant, we can tolerate that. But if someone is ignorant and arrogant, that's just too much to take.

6. Learn to Develop Humor Without Folly.

In leadership, we learn that it's OK to be witty but not silly; fun but not foolish.

7. Learn to Deal in Realities.

Deal in truth. Save yourself the agony of delusion. Just accept life as it is – the whole drama of life. It's fascinating.

Life is unique. Leadership is unique. The skills that work well for one leader may not work at all for another. However, the fundamental skills of leadership can be adopted to work well for just about everyone: at work, in the community and at home.