

The Essential Qualities Of Leadership

Contributed by Jonathan Farrington
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§ Good Memory

To enable them to recall people's names, and the few essential facts

that are pertinent to a wide range of problems.

§ A Genuine Interest In People

Those that you are responsible for leading will know at once if you are genuinely interested in them and particularly in their development. Show this - and you create that personal bond that is essential to the success of your team. You cannot fake an interest in people - they always find you out. A leader can only be successful by ensuring the success of every individual in the team.

§ Integrity

If the team has cause to doubt the integrity of its leader, then it will fail when the team is exposed to stress or a risk. If a person is capable of minor lapses in their personal integrity - they fail to "keep faith" - then they could let their own team members down when they are under pressure. Once the team doubt the leader, that doubt greatly limits their chances of the fullest success.

§ The Ability To Communicate Effectively

A good leader must be able to talk - and write - simply, clearly and persuasively. They must also listen and digest information intently. Communication is a two way process.

§ Decisiveness

There is a time when a decision must be made and a risk taken, even though the facts may be incomplete. A leader must recognise when further analysis is unprofitable and action is needed. It helps if the cost of changing the decision is known. if the cost is low, the risk is low.

§ The Ability To Relax

If the team is kept tense and under pressure, irritation arises and performance fails. this is overcome by deliberately introducing a "break" just a light remark or opportunity for laughter. The importance lays in the frequency and the need for the "break" to be related to the task or the people not "a funny

story". The break should be brief even momentary. It should also come at an opportune moment.

§ Genuine Enthusiasm

Inner conviction - belief in the team and the objectives before it - gives rise to enthusiasm. This must be visible to the members of the team. It provides the "motive power" they use to tackle their jobs with courage and hope. If the leader has no belief in the task why should their team even attempt it?

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