Stepping Up to Be a True Leader

It is only after having developed many of the fundamentals of management that you can begin to become a true leader. Managers help to bring out the best in others; leaders do so as well. However, leaders will, in turn, possess not only the tools of a great manager, but other characteristics as well. It is the combination of factors that encourages others to follow.

Why leaders need to possess the principles of management first is because the skills and techniques are so intertwined. Communication skills form much of the foundation, and as you have seen are critical in planning, hiring, motivating, training, coaching, and counseling.

Above and beyond this, a leader needs to exhibit certain core values that inspire others and help garner respect from staff, peers, and customers. As we mentioned in Chapter 1, you are now on two teams—that of a team player, working in tandem with other managers; and a team leader, developing your team for the long run.

With respect to your customers, you might find yourself on either one of the two teams, depending on the circumstances of the sale. As a sales manager, you may need to be a team player during a conversion project within the customer's operation and then the

team leader, ensuring that the training is implemented in order to get the customer's operation fully up and running. Also, while you are often leading individuals to higher performance and productivity, you are also very often leading teams, small and large. Before looking at various types of teams, it is important to first understand what teams are all about.

The Characteristics of a Team

We have all been involved in teams from a very young age. This might have been in school, on the playing field, at home with family, or with friends. No matter what the team, the successful ones have certain commonalities.

Team definition: *Groups of people with common skills working together toward a set of common goals, whose members communicate with and trust one another.*

Types of Teams

There are two types of teams that need to be considered: the relationship team and the transactional one.

The relationship team is the one concerned with the ongoing responsibility for the project. This team is program-oriented and is consistently communicating potential solutions and improvements. A relationship team does not typically have a specific timetable associated with it, but rather it is a long-term team with an indefinite end point.

The transactional team typically has a start and stop point for an identifiable projects. Like a relationship team's goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely; however, once the project is complete, this type of team will often disband.

Teams and Planning

The foundation for establishing teams often comes out of the planning process. That is, it can be a strategy used to achieve an objective or goal. At the same time, just like in planning, a preassessment is necessary, in this case to see what type of team it should be and who should be the members.

Assessment—Where Are You Now?

Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the individual team members is key to putting a team together. It then allows you to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the team as a whole.

Some questions on a micro (individual) level to consider are:

- What are the DISC patterns of the individuals?
- What are the probable strengths and potential weaknesses associated with those patterns?
- Have the individuals offset those potential weaknesses through a conscious effort?
- Based on job function, where are the salespeople in relationship to the training cycle?
- What training is needed to move the salespeople through the cycle?
- What is their level of eagerness (motivation) and knowledge and skills (four areas that make up the exceptional sales professional: communication skills, business acumen, technical knowledge, and market experience)?
- What coaching goals are already in place for the potential team members? What will the next set of goals require?

Other macro (team-level) areas to consider are:

- What strengths need to be brought to the team?
- Are the territories properly aligned?
- Are there any gaps where new hires or recruiting efforts need to focus?
- What team training needs to be implemented?

Mission

Because you have established a mission statement for your department or area of responsibility, the direction for the team has a baseline from which to work.

SMART Goals

To move everyone toward the mission, you will need to set goals for the individual salesperson as well as the team. The goals must move the team toward the mission's completion.

Responsibility

Each team member has been assigned responsibility and account-ability for the tasks and functions needed to make the team success-ful. Of course, involving people from other departments within the company is also important to enhancing many sales teams. Manufac-turing, finance, distribution, IT, and other departments could easily play a part on a team. In general, people from outside of one area (cross-functional) work especially well on transactional teams.

Tracking

All goals and action items need to be tracked properly, including time frames associated with them that are tied to the responsible parties. This allows everyone on the team to know when the deliv-erables are due and who is the primary responsible person for any particular project or task. It also should include checkpoints and/or progress reports along the way.

Action Items

Again, responsibility needs to be assigned to each action item the team needs to complete along the way in order to reach the goal(s). Each action item needs to be clearly understood and communicated to all involved.

Flexibility

Finally, establish contingencies, not only just in case, but also be-cause change is inevitable. Being too rigid can only stifle growth.

The process around internal team planning has now been identi-fied. However, teams can also include others outside of your organi-zation, and, as you know in selling, it is critical to team up with your customer. This is how true long-term partnerships are formed.

MATCHING YOUR TEAM WITH YOUR CUSTOMER'S TEAM

Teaming up with customers is a process that helps establish joint goals and strategies. Many of the same concepts for developing your internal team apply to developing a partnership with your cus-tomers.

Before creating external teams, determining what the customer considers important will ensure the success of the team relationship.

The planning stage is the best time to do an assessment and establish the foundation and the customer's expectations. Some questions to consider are:

- What is the political climate of the customer's business?
- Who in the customer's organization wants to be a team player? Who does not?
- Who is best for the relationship team?
- Who is best for the transactional team?
- How deep in the customer's organization are you going to be allowed to go?
- How high up in the organization are you going to be allowed to go?
- Will you have access to certain internal customer meetings on related projects?
- Are there backup or substitute team members?

Answers to these and other related questions will help establish the structure and operation of each team.

Once the customer's environment has been established, the next step is to pick the relationship and transactional teams. Keep in mind that usually the transactional teams cannot be created until the project has begun. This is because transactional teams often are designed to solve a current problem or offset a known future problem.

An initial step in deciding on team members is to brainstorm all of the departments that are involved. As you saw in Chapter 3 on planning, the more aligned you become with the customers, the stronger the relationship can be. Remember to think ''out of the box'' here, as you might find that a department that you least expected is actually a primary stakeholder. IT, for example, is key in so many new initiatives, as technology plays such a pivotal role in analyzing, managing and communicating information and data. Here are some of the main corporate departments or functions to look to team up with as it relates to both organizations—yours and your customer's:

- Sales
- Marketing
- Purchasing
- Legal
- Finance
- Engineering
- Corporate executives
- Operations
- IT
- Customer Service
- Manufacturing
- R&D

Once this has been identified, the next step is to create cross-functional teams.

A note of caution for teams in general: In the beginning managers tend to establish a "committee of one" versus team approach. In this case, the manager tries to become the hub for all communications. This centralized control can generate departmental barriers, which tend to hurt the team. Again, keep in mind the team definition: *Groups of people with common skills working together toward a set of common goals, whose members communicate and trust one another.* This means that while you may be taking on a leadership role, you should not make yourself the centerpiece of the team, whereby everyone is either relying on or resenting your authority. Rather, you should communicate that you are still a member of the team and have the same goals as everyone else.

Selecting the Team Players for Cross-Functional Teams

This type of relationship team will be made up of key players, not necessarily management, from the predetermined departments. The objective is to get a team that is closest to the issue, product, or operation. The players selected need to:

- Be a knowledgeable representative of the respective department or area.
- Meet the motivation requirements from the earlier set of questions.

- Be willing to work with or even lead transactional teams.
- Be solution-oriented.

Once the players are determined, each player needs to be assigned a specific function as a team member based on expertise. It is also important early on that each team player describe to the other members her respective job function and responsibilities. In other words, do not assume that everyone knows what everyone else does. The more understanding that team members have of one another and the roles they play within their organizations, the more solutions-oriented the team will be.

Also, by assigning specific tasks along with accountability to each team player, buy-in for the project is created for the players as a whole. The more team members understand the importance that they have for the team, the more motivated those team members will be. In addition, it tends to be best that one person is ultimately responsible for the completion of an action item. This does not mean that others do not have their say, nor that their involvement is not expected. Rather, it is difficult to spread accountability too thin. When this happens, everyone tends to point fingers.

Influencing Your Customer's Team

The best way to influence the customer's team and to become a partner is to find the common denominators between the two. Although most of this would have been done in the planning stage, reminding the customer of the common elements is significant in convincing him to become, and stay, a partner. For example:

1. Both partners have certain common objectives (e.g., profit improvement, improved quality, cost containment, etc.).
2. Both have an equal risk, which includes something to gain and something to lose.
3. Both add value to one another.
4. Both are supportive of the other instead of being competitive or territorial.
5. Both are reliable and straightforward.
6. Both enjoy the relationship and work at making it even stronger.

Sometimes companies choose to keep a progress or feedback form that encompasses all of the updated information on work being done with the customer. The feedback form helps to keep your plan, your team players, and the customer's team players on track. The written document could be distributed at regular intervals, for example, weekly, biweekly, or monthly.

THE EVOLUTION OF A TEAM

Remember, teams can be of different sizes and types and can take on a personality of their own. The one unifying factor is the progression that they follow:

Stages of Team Development

In 1965, Dr. Bruce Tuckman developed a theory based on the four stages of team development as a way to look at the process that teams go through when working together. Then, in the mid 1970s, he refined the theory, identifying a fifth stage to team development.

1. Forming
2. Storming
3. Norming
4. Performing
5. Adjourning

In the *Forming* stage, team members are introduced and become acquainted with one another. They often share information about themselves, and some of their strengths and weaknesses are either shared or become visible.

The second stage, *Storming*, is often the most difficult. Team members find out, not just through information sharing but also by actual actions and behaviors, who is willing to contribute and at what level. Any preconceived notions members had about one another become amplified or altered (positive or negative) as they become more familiar with one another.

In the *Norming* stage, team members have worked through some of the initial challenges and differences and begin to set up processes to complete the tasks and project. A consensus is reached as to who

is responsible for which deliverable and how and when it is to be accomplished.

In the *Performing* stage, the strategies and tactics are carried out in pursuit of the objectives and goals. Relationship issues are, for the most part, cleared up, and every member begins to carry out his or her duties as they relate to the role they play on the team.

In the final stage, *Adjourning*, the team will share their results with others and formulate the next steps. Those next steps could be that the team applies the knowledge or action and then moves into the next round of activities, or that the outcomes are transferred to or used by others not relating directly to the team and the team disbands.

As you look at these five stages today, keep in mind that they can actually relate to anything from a short-term transaction team to a long-term relationship-oriented team. It is the amount of time and intensity you spend in each stage that will vary. The key is that from all of the planning already done to be able to limit the extremes in order to save more time for productive team involvement as opposed to spending too much time in the ''storming'' stage, which is often the case when teams are not well thought-out and expectations and goals are vague or unclear.

While teams do not always have a specific team leader—that role may rotate among different team members—there will be times now and certainly going forward as you progress in your career as a manager that you will need to step up and answer the call of leadership.

TIME TO LEAD

Now that you have an understanding of what it takes to develop a team, it is critical to exhibit the leadership qualities that will allow you as a team leader to thrive.

Leaders Are Made, Not Born

While there has been a long-standing debate about this, there is no denying that leadership is a skill that needs to be cultivated. While some more than others grow up showing a propensity to lead at an earlier age, circumstances can also greatly affect leadership growth, and factors will come into play that push many in the right direction.

For those that argue that people are born with innate talents, it is true that there are "natural athletes" or prodigies. On the other hand, if a natural talent is not developed or fostered, that talent will atrophy. Also, it is often those who show the greatest potential who work the hardest. These are the ones who progress to the next level of their sport or career. Eventually some of those that exhibit the greatest talents can become legends.

By believing that there is no such thing as "pure" born leaders, the paradigm shifts to believing that skills, confidence, and self-image will determine leadership performance. Those who have the desire to achieve their mission in life, and who can use strengths to offset weaknesses, can have unlimited leadership potential.

Managers of Power

There are generally three categories of power: fear-generated, gain-generated, and sincerity-generated.

Leaders that use fear-generated power are interested in control. Their followers are afraid that they may lose out spiritually, emotionally, physically, or mentally if they do not follow the leader. Losing the sense of belonging is a significant fear generator. Followers are intimidated by the consequences of not following. "Go along to get along" is the motto. Do not question their authority because the consequences might cause some measure of pain.

Leaders that use gain-generated power are also interested in control. Followers look to the leader to provide for them if they do something for the leader. "Do A and B for me, and I will do X and Y in return for you." Similar to a fear-generating leader, this type might even tap into a specific area such as an emotional or spiritual desire or some weakness in the person that they know they can't resist. Therefore, they are really deceiving or coercing the person into doing something as opposed to getting authentic buy-in.

People will follow leaders that use sincerity-generated power, because this type of leader allows the followers to make an educated commitment to the mission. Followers believe in the leader's vision because it is communicated clearly and openly. They are not being manipulated by the leader, as is the case in the other power styles. Leaders that use sincerity-generated power build long-lasting relationships with their followers. This type of leader is service-oriented, trustworthy, and inspiring.

Leaders that use sincerity-generated power are, in effect, aspiring to as well as teaching the corporate values and providing guidance as it relates to them. They bring people together for open discussion of these values, which in turn fosters a sincere desire to move in the right direction.

It is really the true leader that uses sincerity-generated as her only power style. Other leaders are short-term and will not create any long-lasting devotion nor trust and respect from others.

The following are some core examples of what a leader is, including some common traits and characteristics, along with some ways you can continue in the direction of becoming a strong leader.

Visionary

Leaders have a vision of what can be. They go beyond themselves to consider possibilities that others cannot see. Often they have a desire to be the best, which generates excitement and enthusiasm for the people who are following them. This sense of purpose and direction unites the team and maximizes the team's capabilities.

Part of the reason many leaders are so successful is because they provide a safe environment that allows the people to be motivated from within. It is what some call the ''passionate workplace.'' You now have the ability to develop the vision for your team as well as marshal your staff around it. It is a surefire way to get both you and your team moving in the right direction—together.

Strategist

A vision without a plan is merely a dream. Leaders are constantly thinking through and planning the next move. What are the consequences? What are the rewards? What changes can be made to strengthen the team? They constantly question strategies and tactics and strive to improve upon the past.

Leaders also know that a strategy without action is the same as having no plan at all. They realize that execution or implementation is key to making any strategy come alive. Leaders innately feel a sense of urgency and then react expeditiously to the opportunities as they take shape. Leaders will stay in the offensive mode at all times with the strategy. Even when their plans are criticized or uncertainty begins to present itself, leaders have the patience to stay the course because they are confident in themselves and their team.

You are a leader in setting the strategy for your team going forward. If you waver, then they will too. Trust in them, and you will get the same in return.

Mentor

Whether you realize it or not, you are not just a manager and coach, but also a mentor. Remember that a real leader is constantly encouraging and empowering his people. This inspires trust, confidence, and commitment to achieve the stated goals. A sense of loyalty is developed toward the leader and the leader's mission because of her willingness to involve her followers.

Leaders believe in the potential of others. In fact, leaders are not afraid to loosen the reins and allow their team to shine. Far too often a manager tries try to take credit for the work being done by his staff. A true leader deflects much of the credit and places it where it belongs, with the team members. The more a leader looks out for the well-being of his employees, the more the commitment will be returned.

Remember that being a mentor comes with your new role. Think about the great mentors you have had over your lifetime. It is your time to step into that role yourself. So don't forget, your staff is looking to you for your input, guidance, and reassurance. Treat them right, and they will not only be looking at you, but beginning to look up to you.

Honesty

Honesty is at the core of management and leadership. If a leader demonstrates her commitment to being truthful and forthright, it can become contagious. Honesty in a leader is always a sign of strength. Believing it is a weakness is actually a character flaw in an insecure person, who will remain a follower at best. Also, remember that it can take just one lie or deceptive act to lose the trust of your staff forever.

But honesty is not just about telling the truth; it is about being candid and up front with your team. This is more important than ever because, in the face of rapid change and uncertainty, people long for truthful and full disclosure of information. That is not to say that there might not be certain information that is not appropriate to share at any particular moment, but whenever possible,

provide the maximum rather than ''just enough'' information. Fur-thermore, lack of open sharing of information can also be a demoti-vator, and people are very perceptive and will see through mixed messages.

The more you express yourself—your concerns, desires, and ex-pectations—the more you will get openness from your team in re-turn. So if you feel your team needs to know something that could affect them, address it, even if you don't have all of the answers. If not, the uncertainty and fear will only build, making a problem that much more difficult to handle later on. Your team will surely re-spect you more in the long run, and you will all reap the rewards of closer working relationships.

Work/Life Balance

Another age-old question that has garnered a great deal of discussion and debate by thought leaders in the area of leadership: ''What is the quintessential balance between work and free time?'' Typically we think of great leaders as working seventy-hour weeks, on week-ends, and so on. However, these are not necessarily great leaders. A true leader knows how to weigh the various aspects of her life, in-cluding what is most important to her, and then set her own priorit-ies and stick to them.

Therefore, some leaders will inevitably fit into the category of ''workaholic,'' putting his career and the business first and foremost, while others value their family and downtime as much as or more than their work. Great leaders know how and where their energy and time needs to be spent in order to achieve this balance and, in return, they as well as those around them all benefit.

Again, no right or exact prescription works for everyone. Both types of values have culminated in excellent leaders. So think about the balance you want in your life, and stay true to it. Also, at the same time remember that your staff has their own set of needs and values, so be sure to respect them as well.

Innovative Thinkers

Leaders ask themselves, ''Where can we go from here?'' They look at roadblocks and hurdles merely as challenges in the course ahead. They are also able to use creativity and imagination to overcome the obstacles. In fact, by surpassing a barrier, you are one step closer

to achieving a goal. Some have even gone as far as calling leaders paranoid, meaning they are not only looking ahead at the road in front of them, but over their shoulders to be sure that competition and other influences (both external and internal) are playing to their favor. If something is off course, they look to themselves as well as others for ways to get back on track, never saying, ''But this is the way it has always been done.''

You should always look for the new, better approach, and ask that your team does the same. Also, know that progress comes from unexpected places. Therefore, look out for the unexpected from your competitors, and encourage new ideas from your staff.

Another way to look at creativity and innovation is to not only encourage debate but even disagreement. The mark of a confident person is one who can accept the differences of opinion of others. You are building a team of high performers. Don't just ask for their input when you feel it is in line with yours. Challenge them to challenge your thinking. No one has all of the answers, let alone all of the right ones. Value this way of thinking, and then look for ways to reward it as well.

Committed to a Win-Win Mentality

Because their focus is constantly on winning, leaders never look backward. They do not waste their time looking for someone to blame. Leaders are dedicated to excellence and quality. This means that they do not look for ways to break people down, but rather, constantly look for ways to build people up. They also have the ability to be introspective. They recognize their capabilities and limitations. Through their positive energy they are able attract compatible competencies. Their team then feels this energy, and they are uplifted by it, especially during difficult and trying times.

A leader should always give her people the benefit of the doubt. First challenge them and then trust in them. Anything else would be stifling them and, in turn, yourself. It is commonly believed that your team members can only live up to the expectations that you have for them. If you have low expectations, you will get that in return. You'll be pleasantly surprised at what your team is capable of when you set the bar high and allow some freedom for them to reach their goals. Have confidence in your team; it will be returned in spades.

Excellent Communicators

You have already looked in depth at the importance of communication in building your careers in management. Leaders exemplify the best in communication, with all, not just select, business relationships. Leaders can articulate their vision at will. Furthermore, the goals and direction that they have put in place are made clear and understandable. They constantly communicate their standards, ideals, and values, and relate them to every task and accomplishment. This is because they have put their goals in definable terminology.

Leaders are also considered very approachable. They realize the importance of being highly visible to their staff and readily available to those who need them. Some of the greatest leaders spend a major portion of their time on interpersonal skills. It is their people-development focus that in turn opens others to them. Because of this style of consistent interaction, leaders get regular, timely, and applicable information.

By being a great communicator, you can then encourage open communication among others. When you communicate, remember that all of the players on a team, including yourself, are equals; you just each have different roles and responsibilities.

Excellent Listeners

You have also learned the importance of listening in order to be a great communicator. Great leaders have the uncanny ability to actively listen, focusing not just on the person with whom they are speaking, but also on absorbing the commonality of messages that are coming from their staff. Because of their listening skills, leaders have a tendency to learn a great deal about what is going on with people at all levels of the organization, as opposed to just the thoughts of a few. This allows them to make adjustments through consensus.

You will need to practice the skill and art of actively listening. It will be evident to your staff, showing that you care, and it will also help you to make sound decisions. After all, you need to gain the trust of others in order to get the necessary input and cooperation from them. The more you listen, the more you can expect others to listen to you.

Self-Awareness

Leaders not only analyze the abilities of others, but are constantly reviewing their own strengths and weaknesses. They know their own abilities, and they strive to constantly build on them. Leaders are honest with themselves, and they are not afraid to look to others with specific strengths to offset any of their own weaknesses. A leader is able to analyze those areas that cause self-doubt, and work to improve themselves.

Leaders are at the same time sensitive to others who act out or react based on their own insecurities or fears; they attempt to help those people find direction and purpose. Remember that just like your staff, you are not perfect either. Sometimes the more you feel you are running up against a wall, the more the solution is with you and not with others. Don't overdemand, but instead realize that the best way to address the shortcomings of others is to be in touch with your own.

Leadership by Example—Walk the Talk

Leaders inspire the team by showing their willingness to pitch in. True leaders do not live exclusively in an ivory tower, but rather spend a great deal of time at all levels of the organization, getting to know the staff and letting the input of others carry substantial weight, as opposed to just paying lip service to their staff. They realize that the foundation of the organization is not the corner office but rather the people on the front lines who develop the products and services, interact with customers, and ensure that the processes run smoothly along the way.

Show your team that you care by talking with not just them but all stakeholders in all areas in your organization and at the customer sites as well. Show that you are not afraid to roll up your sleeves and get your hands dirty. People want a leader they can respect and who understands things from their point of view, not someone who is out of touch with their needs. So be the first in line to take part in a training program or a team-building exercise that involves your staff and others.

Also, in setting the right example, hold yourself responsible first and foremost. The sign of a true leader is someone who can stand up and take the credit when something went right and take the blame when something went wrong. Businesses without leadership

have a plethora of finger pointers. Before you look at who did what wrong and why, look at who did what right and how.

Risk Takers

If an organization is to grow, it needs to accept failures as a distinct possibility. A leader does this and asks others to not fear it either. In fact, leaders go by the philosophy that a failure or mistake can only help get you that much closer to a success.

When Thomas Edison was asked how it felt to have failed more than 10,000 times in attempting to invent the light bulb, his reply was that he never failed; instead he successfully figured out 10,000 ways not to make a light bulb.

You need to show your team that you are willing to take risks, and that you have the ability to ask the right questions to mitigate them. When someone comes to you with a new, unproven idea, don't brush it off. Allow him to think it through and see if it really seems to make sense. If it does, look for ways to make it happen, rather than excuses to not take on something new. And if it is not a complete success, latch on to the good that came out of the experience and the learning for the next time. You will then be encouraging more risk going forward.

Ethical

While all of the above are central to being a great leader, being ethical is perhaps the most important characteristic of our greatest leaders. A lack of high ethical standards is why some of those who we thought were at the top for good came tumbling down. The leadership role is first and foremost based on a foundation of trust and credibility. Leaders are not afraid to voice what they believe in. At the same time, they keep their promises to both their followers and to everyone they touch. Leaders set very high standards of integrity for themselves and their organization. They always err on the side of fairness, which could, at times, seem like it is holding the company back. Yet in the long run the organization will be that much stronger for it.

As a leader, you will have to make some very tough decisions. Realize that it is impossible to make everyone happy all the time, but it is possible to be fair to all concerned. While business is very competitive and difficult decisions will need to be made, the deci-

sions you make will stay with you and your team for a long time, so make them ones that you can be proud of.

Positive Attitude

One cannot say enough about the importance of attitude. Great leaders have a positive attitude that is infectious. They exude confidence and have the ability to bounce back in the face of adversity. The more it seems that the odds are stacked against them, the more they are able to rise to the occasion. In fact, many of the greatest leaders have made a name for themselves by being resilient during the toughest of times. People sometimes describe them as unwavering or unflappable. This does not mean that they are putting on an act and not being true to themselves. A great leader, more than others, can ask for help when something is wrong or they are in need. This is only the more proof that they are continually committed to the betterment of themselves and those that surround them.

Also, your attitude is evident in everything you do. Your team is always looking to you to see how you react. Even when everything is not moving on all cylinders, be the first one to build them up, to congratulate the team and the individual contributors on a job well done.

One great way of maintaining a great attitude is through the use of positive visualization. See yourself as someone who can take the lead and address challenges that will inevitably cross your path. You already possess many of the core characteristics of a great leader. It is now only a matter of time and commitment.

Steps Toward Leadership

1. *Decision*. You must make the decision to do what it takes to move into a leadership position. This means to start embracing the characteristics of great leaders now. This can only help you to grow in your new role as a sales manager.

2. *Determination*. Accept the responsibility of leadership and feel the driving need to want to experience that leadership role. Be tenacious when others attempt to question your desire. Passion and drive are not only the mark of a true leader, but the mark of a person who endeavors to become one.

3. *Study*. Become a student of leadership. Read about the subject, listen to tapes and speeches, and take classes on leadership.

There is an array of learning tools on the market. Take the best ideas out of each and begin incorporating them into your daily activities and way of thinking.

4. *Role Model.* Select your favorite leaders. They could be modern-day leaders or figures from history, or both. Then begin to work with the combination of styles that fits you best. You may also have mentors that you know personally and can learn from them along the way. Listen and observe; while they will approach leadership in different ways, they all have something valuable to share.

5. *Discipline.* Becoming a leader requires a change of habits that were acquired as a follower. Self-control and constant effort are needed to implement leadership characteristics. Don't try to exhibit every characteristic so dramatically that it comes across as superficial. As you saw, leadership is based on sincerity; give it time, and it will come.

6. *Practice.* Learn the basics and then consistently work until you begin to master them, adding some new element or level of consciousness all the time. Eventually, not only will you come to master the art of leadership, but you can teach others how to better lead as well. You yourself will ultimately become that role model that others will want to emulate.

All of this leads you back to the first statement about leaders being made, not born. It might not always seem so easy, nor loads of fun, but it is well within your reach. This book will hopefully prove to be one of many great tools you utilize as you continue through this journey. You will certainly be assisted by other people and resources along the way as well.

Some say that it is not the end result but rather the journey that contains all of the rewards. You should be commended on taking the time to reward yourself. It is with this proactive attitude that you are already exemplifying your ability to lead. Above all else, be patient with yourself and others. Managers, new and old, all face similar challenges and have the same horizon full of boundless opportunities. You have already proven that you are a success, and you are well on your way to even greater accomplishments.