

How to Become a Great Leader

“Leadership is the challenge to be more than average.”

~ Jim Rohn ~

Recently I had the pleasure of presenting to 500 students at a youth leadership conference. It struck me that all of the students before me had the potential to become the next generation of great leaders in their family, school, career, and community. I asked myself the question, “What will it take for these students to become great leaders?” In response to that question, I have identified three essential qualities - The 3 V’s - that all leaders possess and that any individual can develop to help inspire and instruct others to become extraordinary leaders:

1. **Vision** – All great leaders have a sense of what they want and where they are going. In fact, the word lead means to go in a specific direction. By creating a vision of your life you automatically start manifesting your future. Michael Gerber, who wrote *The E-Myth Revisited*, describes vision as seeing through feeling. In other words, what do you passionately see for yourself in the future? How do you want your life to look? A vision is an ideal that you strive for that pulls you into the future and motivates you to become great and excellent.

I have a simple vision: *To help people joyfully create the life they desire.* To help you create a clear vision for yourself, answer the following questions:

- What are you passionate about?
- What will your life look like in 5, 10, or 20 years?
- At the end of your life, how do you want to be remembered?
- If you could write a vision statement about your life, what would it be?

“If you do not know where you are going, every road will get you nowhere.”

~ Henry Kissinger ~

2. **Values** – Values are the qualities and things in your life that you think are important. Great leaders know what they stand for and what is important to them. There are many distractions and temptations in life, and if you don’t base your decisions on your own solid values, then you may fall for the distractions. Some examples of values are honesty, balance, trust, determination, confidence, being healthy, contribution, family, wealth, etc.

In my experience, the leaders whom I respect the most are the leaders who are consistent in all areas of their life. A person who values his family, career, and health would balance their life by making time for their family, career, and health.



- What are the five most important values in your life?
- How are they incorporated into your life?
- How can you incorporate your values into all areas of your life?
- Do you let your values guide you in your decisions?
- How can you teach other people to have a strong sense of values?

“A single lie destroys a whole reputation for integrity.”

~ Baltasar Gracian ~

3. **Voice** – Voice means speaking your truth. Many people want to avoid conflict or hide the way they feel instead of being honest. Great leaders are confident in themselves to voice their opinions. They are also confident enough to listen to the advice of others. In fact, listening is an essential quality a leader must possess in order to understand the needs and wants of others. Having a voice also means making decisions with confidence even if they are wrong. All leaders make mistakes, yet they learn by their mistakes to move in the direction of success. The last part of having a voice is ‘Walking your Talk.’ Essentially, being congruent in what you say and do. To me, this is characterized by integrity. Consider the following questions to help you develop your voice:

- Are there any areas of your life where you are avoiding conflict?
- Why are you avoiding conflict in these areas?
- Do you hesitate to share your opinions?
- Does the fear of failure prevent you from moving forward?
- Do your actions match your words?
- Do you say what you mean and mean what you say? If not, how could you be more congruent?

“As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others.”

~ Bill Gates ~

In life we all can become great leaders who help LEAD (Learn, Experience, And Direct) others. By developing the 3 V's - Vision, Values and Voice – you will not only be successful and fulfilled, but you also help others become successful and fulfilled in their lives.

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