

Let's Talk: The characteristics of good leaders

Presenter – Lynn Borteck, Clinical Counselor

Hi. Let's talk about the characteristics of good leaders. In your lifetime, you've probably had lots of different leaders. Maybe you've had coaches, teachers, other kinds of advisors. But were they all good leaders? Did you think that they were good leaders? Today's talk will be about good leadership skills.

What good leaders don't do

So what makes a leader less than great? You may have a leader who is wishy-washy or vague, or fickle, changing their minds all the time, which is very confusing. And you might find that they are hesitant to make decisions, and ultimately that becomes a person who is very uninspiring. And that doesn't make a good leader.

Leadership skills can be learned

The good news is that leadership skills can be learned. They can be learned. They can be improved. They can be refined. And they can be practiced. So as a leader, you can constantly be improving and looking to grow your skill set. Good leaders are made not born.

Show self-confidence

So let's talk about some of the traits that go into a leadership skill set. The first one is self-confidence. It's important for leaders to believe in themselves. And when they do, that makes them secure enough to learn and to listen to other people, which is really important.

Be decisive

Next, good leaders are decisive. They may not make the right call every time, but they are willing to make the call. That helps other people that are trying to follow them because when they have a leader who is wishy-washy, it can make them anxious and discouraged.

Act with integrity

The next trait is integrity. Good leaders have integrity. If they tell you something is going to happen, it happens, they make it happen. And if for some reason they can't, they let you know. And they let you know why. Good leaders are accountable and reliable.

Be fair

The next trait is fairness. Good leaders are fair. They set realistic expectations. And they're empathetic to the people that they lead. They also are willing to give people second chances if they make a mistake.

Communicate

Next, good leaders have good communication skills. That includes giving clear and understandable directions and also in their writing and in their speaking having good communication skills. And they're good listeners. It's very important to be a good listener if you're going to lead other people.

Inspire others

A good leader is also someone who inspires other people. They engage and motivate other people through their own enthusiasm and their own passion rather than through issuing orders.

Make use of mentoring

Skillful leaders can also have mentors and be mentors. They're not threatened by either. They're happy to learn from others. And they're comfortable teaching other people as well.

Show resilience

Resilience is another really important trait. Good leaders learn from experience. Even if they have a disappointment, they're able to pick themselves up afterwards and move on.

Be optimistic

Good leaders are also optimistic. They radiate positive energy that really motivates people instead of negative energy that really can drag people down and discourage them.

Continue to improve

The 10th and final trait is that good leaders know that there's always room for improvement. They are curious. They are lifelong learners. They know that there's always room for improvement.

Practice for success

The leadership skills we've talked about today apply to work, but they can really be used in your every day life. The more you practice them and refine them, the more comfortable and effective you'll be as a leader.

Resources For Living

The EAP is administered by Resources For Living, LLC. This material is for informational purposes only. This material provides a general overview of the topic. Information is believed to be accurate as of the production date; however, it is subject to change.

©2019 Resources For Living

44.27.375.1-RFL (8/19)