FOUNDATIONS OF LEADERSHIP
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Lesson 5
FIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF ALL LEADERS

There are certain skills that all leaders have. If you develop these skills, you will be able to lead in most leadership roles.

I led an international organization from 1997-2006. During that time I developed skills to create a vision, goals and strategy, raise money for our organization, hire and train staff and manage a large organization. In 2006 I moved to the United States and worked for another organization. I didn’t know anything about this organization, but because I had these five skills of a leader I was able to oversee and lead a large department of the American Red Cross. I oversaw 300 volunteers in 13 counties or districts and train or recruit trainers for their roles in disaster response.

- I learned their policies by reading all of their books and taking all of their classes
- I built relationships with other leaders who had more experience than me
- I created goals and a strategy
- I appointed leaders over departments
- I built relationships with businesses and other organizations
- I led the way as an example
- I sacrificed time and strength

I saw all of that to say that these five skills will help you lead in almost any situation.

If you have these five characteristics you can lead in almost any situation.
FIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF ALL LEADERS

1. **They see a need, opportunity or problem.**
   This is the key to success of leadership and most businesses.

   “What is the problem and how can you solve it?”

   - Poverty in Cambodia
   - Lack of job skills
   - Opportunity to teach English, Computer and Office Skills to give job skills to poor Cambodian youth
   - Poor health
   - Orphans
   - Low-quality public education

   **You don’t have to have all the answers or skills to solve these problems, but someone must lead the way.**

   - Research
   - Create a vision and a strategy
   - Share your vision with others and invite them to join with you

**QUESTION:**

“What need do you see in society that touches your heart or you would like to help solve?”

- Or problems
- Or business opportunity

2. **They have some ability**
   Make a list of your skills, talents and experience
   - Sewing
   - Vehicle repair
   - Drawing or Painting
   - Singing
   - Decorating

*Every person has some skill which they can use to meet a need in society.*

*This skill can be used to help others and can possibly be used to earn income.*
1. Find the skill or talent inside of you
2. Develop that skill or talent
3. Find a way to connect that skill or talent or experience in life to a need
4. Don’t be afraid to start small and “field test” what you want to do
5. Others will rejoice with you or receive benefit and join you

What are your skills?

Artistic Skills:
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

Business/Office Skills:
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

Family/Health Skills:
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

Mechanical Skills:
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

Media, Arts and Technology Skills:
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
Performing Arts Skills:
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

Social Science Skills:
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________

3. They have a passion
When we see a need and we have the skills to meet that need, often a passion or excitement rises in our heart and emotions.
  - Passion drives us to sacrifice
  - Passion drives us to continue even when we are discouraged
  - Passion draws others to our vision

4. They have skills with people
Leaders must work and connect with people – customers, staff, fellow-leaders. If we lack skills with people it will be difficult to move forward.
  - Communication skills
  - Relationship skills (asking questions, listening, learning from others)
  - People-Solving Skills (solving problems with people)
  - How to cast a vision and draw people into that vision?
  - How to put people into the appropriate role for them?

We must know how to speak to people with appropriate words – people of different levels in society – and how to write, if we are writing proposals or letters. We must understand about how certain words open doors and other words close doors.
Vision is the foundation of everything! If you have no vision, then you don’t know where you are going!

- We must learn how to engage others in conversation and create “warmth” in the relationship
- We must learn how to resolve personal conflicts with people as well as relationship conflicts among staff
- We must learn how to form a vision and how to share concisely and with enthusiasm with others so they will join us in our vision.
- We must help people find “their place” in our workplace or on our team and know the procedures to release them and support them so they are successful.

5. They have a vision and goals

Vision is what we see for the future – for our lives and for our work.

Goals are markers that will guide us to our future.

Strategy is how we will reach those goals and fulfill the vision.

Vision is the foundation of everything! If you have no vision, then you don’t know where you are going! If you don’t know where you are going those following you do not know where they are going and they will stop following you.

You don’t have to know all the details for the vision and the end, but you must see at least generally what the end is:

- One cake shop?
- Several cake shops?
- Cake shops in every city?
- Cake Shops in every country?

(Starbucks, KFC, McDonalds, banks, petrol stations, children’s program, training centers)
There is another complete lesson on Strategic Planning, but leaders must “see” the vision. They must know where they are going at least generally, then set long-term and short-term goals.

- We must be able to see what it will look like in the next few years. Who are we trying to reach? How big will we be? What results do we want to see? (This takes time to think, research and plan. Often, we need to look at others who have been successful to start getting ideas of what we can do…or we think outside the box and imagine something new)

- Goals are steps or stages that will lead us to the fulfillment of our vision. Goals are always associated with our vision. We ask ourselves, “What must I do this year, this quarter, that will lead me to fulfill my vision for the future.”

- Goals should be SMART Goals (this is another lesson – no time to explain in detail here)

- Setting a vision and goals is not that difficult, but strategy is more challenging. We choose the best strategy we can, but we must evaluate our strategy regularly (at least 2x per year) to make sure we are on target. Often, we have to adjust our strategy.

ASSIGMENT:

Go back and answer the questions in this lesson on pages 21, 22 and 23.