

Leadership

Harriett Lemer



The Practical Qualities of Effective Leaders

What are the practical qualities of effective leaders? Stephen Axley, professor of management at Western Illinois University, studied 200 + managers and supervisors. His research determined these points.

1. **Communicate well.**
 - Show clarity in giving instructions and information.
 - Share information.
 - Use interactive communications.
2. **Listen.**

Good listeners learn much.

 - Provide feedback on what is going well.
3. **Be approachable.**

When followers feel heard and leaders are approachable, leaders become better informed.

 - Be receptive and concerned.
 - Give undivided attention.
4. **Delegate.**
 - Broaden others' responsibilities and authority.
 - Motivate to promote commitment.
 - Lead by example.
 - Govern your actions in accord with what you want and expect from others.

- Earn respect: actions demonstrate high expectations of self and others.
5. **“Read” situations and people well.**
 - Know when and how to adapt.
 - Know when to ask and when to tell.
 6. **Use power judiciously.**

Respect earns voluntary commitment.

 - Use several personal power bases, such as your expertise and relationships based on respect.
 7. **Be a good teacher.**

Tutoring is part of coaching.

 - Become knowledgeable; communicate your knowledge in a way people can use it.
 - Challenge followers to earn rewards in learning; be open to new ideas and methods.
 8. **Care about your people and show it.**

Caring shows the human side of a leader.

 - Genuinely care about your people.
 - Develop a personal power base.
 - Express concern; do little things to convey caring; offer a warm personal greeting; make personal connection; inject a sense of humour.

9. **Be fair, honest, and consistent.**

This is the cornerstone of effective leadership.

 - Show fairness in your expectations and treatment of people.
 - Demonstrate consistency between words and actions.
 - Know how to criticize constructively so you don't trigger defensiveness.
10. **Know how to accept criticism.**

Leaders take chances.

 - Admit when you are wrong; make changes without keeping score.

How do *you* rate on these practical qualities? ▲

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