Leadership

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.

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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