

Leadership Lessons Learned

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- Lead by example. Be the kind of person you would like to follow.
- Lead with integrity, ethics, & authenticity.
- Everyone has leadership potential, & leadership is not bound by position or titles.
- Hire employees that demonstrate their own integrity & ethics. Loyalty is a must.
- Do not bury any problems by looking away; it's always better to bring them to the surface for collective responses & improvement.
- Surround yourself with respected mentors & coaches.
- Demonstrate Social & Emotional Intelligence. Be empathetic to others. They have feelings & life outside work. Situational awareness is critical for leaders.
- Remember that a leader sets the example & has great influence over the emotional well-being of an organization. If you panic, so too will your co-workers & staff.
- Never leave any "dead bodies" in your wake. Do not gain at cost of others. If you do, it is likely that behavior will not only reflect poorly on you, but you will ultimately become the victim.
- Communicate openly with colleagues & staff. Be cautious about favoritism. You will certainly have individuals with stronger assets for the organization. Your job is to treat everyone fairly & with equal respect. Become an active listener.
- If things get really tough, take a mental health day or vacation. Leaders should not bring their angst into the office. Encourage others to do the same.
- Find a few individuals in whom you have trust & invite them to be your confidantes. You do not have to walk this journey alone.
- Celebrate successes along the way – yours & others.
- Create an atmosphere for achievement –then get out of people's way so they can make great things happen.
- Set boundaries about teamwork, decision-making & final authority. When a leader loses control, the organization is weakened, & credibility is compromised.
- Do not be naïve about the political aspects of your organization, or those that are external to it. No successful leader operates in isolation. Read Machiavelli's, *The Prince* & Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*.
- Gather evidence & data before reaching conclusions. Make few assumptions; talk with those with whom you have concerns before you rush to judgment.
- Humor in the workplace lightens the atmosphere & serves as an emotional medicine.
- Find a healthy work-life balance.
- Never stop learning. Set the example for your staff as a lifelong learner.
- Be willing to be wrong & allow both risk and failure. Always be self-aware about lessons learned from these experiences.
- Reap the benefits & joys of leadership. When the negatives outweigh the positives, take a good look at your choices & future decisions.
- You can have it all; it's just a matter of how you define "all."
- Remember that leadership is a lifelong journey; you will get better & more adept with time.
- Follow your heart.