

The 10 commandments successful leadership | by Matt Murphy



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After many years in business, I've identified one significant factor that affects the success of every business. The secret is strong leadership.

Leadership is a critical successful factor for any organisation, not just those that have been operating for some time or grown to become a large business with staff, organisational structures and a hierarchy.

Leadership is an attitude needed throughout your business journey, but it's particularly helpful during challenging times. For start-ups, with limited infrastructure and resources, having this attitude right from the start is critical.

To help get you started on a solid leadership path, here are my 10 commandments of strong leadership:

1. Clarity of purpose, passion and a plan to see it through

To be successful in leadership, you need to have a clear purpose. What is it that you're trying to achieve personally? What's your plan for how you're going to achieve it?

Being really clear about your purpose means you know what you're striving for, what action you're going to take and you can get started on those actions now.

No one else can dictate what you do and how you do it or distract you from achieving your purpose.

Instead, you're focused and can clearly articulate what you're aiming to achieve. You can use that to connect with people and obtain their support on the journey with you. If you convey it with enthusiasm and passion, you'll be even more engaging and capture the hearts and minds of people that can help you get there.

2. Vision and the ability to navigate direction

What's your vision for your business? Where do you want to take your organisation? What do you want to be known for and who will you touch, connect with and serve. Your vision needs to paint a picture of where you're going that your team can visualise achieving and be committed to pursuing through everything they do.

As the leader you need to live and breathe your vision and use it to navigate the direction of your business and point your team in the same direction. Part of navigating your business is being clear about your goals but also the path you will take to get there and making sure you stay on the right path to achieve those goals.

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3. Knowledge

Good leaders have knowledge. They are inquisitive and use their passion and drive to constantly study, learn and know the facts.

They take their learning from many sources and know that knowledge is stored in all sorts of valuable places, especially their team and customers.

They also share their knowledge with others and use it to make decisions, navigate their course and challenge others to develop themselves and achieve greater things.

4. Integrity.

Most people can immediately judge whether you're conducting yourself with integrity or being phony. Without integrity, you're not likely to obtain people's trust and commitment. Without their trust and commitment, they will not support and follow you.

So do what you say you will do, when you said you would do it. Gain people's trust by fulfilling your promises and never giving them reason to doubt you.

5. Experience and success

Good leaders draw on their own experience and learn from other's experiences as well. They reflect on their past, take the learning and identify opportunities for improvement.

They are also great at celebrating the wins, knowing that gaining results builds credibility throughout their organisation and demonstrates valid reasons to appreciate their drive and efforts.

They also share their success with others. Paying credit where credit is due, knowing that will lift others to strive for more wins and greater success.

6. Intuition

Call it gut feel, but good leaders follow their sense of what they believe works. While they might not be able to put their finger precisely on it, that innate belief is still supported somewhat by their knowledge and prior experience, giving them the confidence to make decisions taking all these factors into consideration.

7. Courage

This means having the strength to do what's right, being dedicated to get the job done and having the willingness to risk criticism or worse failure.

They take calculated risks and go the extra mile. They don't settle when it matters, in order to accomplish more than what is expected.

8. Communication

It's good and well to have a clear purpose, vision and plan but you also need to be able to communicate it to others. Good communicators don't just provide the facts, they paint the picture and can convey their purpose and reasons for doing what they do.

They communicate frequently and in many ways to share and gather insights to grow their knowledge and support their pursuits.

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10. Influence

We are all influenced by others. The important question is who influences you and how? Are they influencing you in a manner that supports your personal purpose in life and enhances the skills and qualities you need to achieve that purpose? Much of what we become and achieve is affected by influence, therefore great leaders are also influential. By connecting with others and letting the other 10 commandments shine through, they influence others in positive ways.

11. Finally, great leaders add value to others

They take what they know and use it for a greater good, helping others to learn from their knowledge and experience whether it's business or sometimes personal. They inspire them with their greatness and their successes and encourage and motivate them as a result.

They lift others up and show them how to develop their own leadership capability, regardless of where they sit in the organisation. They recognise every member of their team has influence and they encourage them to utilise that influence, thereby creating a multiplying effect in the process. This benefits the individual themselves; the people around them and of course the business itself.

Imagine what your start up business can achieve by fostering these 10 commandments.

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