

Truth about Leadership Outline and Reflection

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### Abstract

In the truth about leadership, Kouzes and Posner present some facts about leadership that they recommend for leaders to be aware of to help them effectively serve other people and advance themselves at the same time. Many vital concepts that contribute to great leadership are highlighted to bring out quality leadership as well as to motivate people to identify the substance they bring to the table. The paper highlights some an outline and chapter reflection to help understand all the leadership truths that Kouzes and Posner identified through years of research

## **Outline**

### **You make a difference**

To be efficient in leadership, a leader needs to begin by identifying and believing themselves to be a key player in leadership. Leadership in itself can be a bit challenging when a leader does not have the confidence needed to help guide people toward reaching their full potential as well as reaching the objectives of the enter organization as a whole. Kouzes and Posner (2002) state that leaders ought to be aware of the part they play and believe that their role in the organization is crucial to self-success as well as organization's general success.

### **Whatever you need you already have**

At times one can look for leadership in a variety of places when all along, there is potential deep with that person that let out so that it can be natured and grow towards the fulfillment of the real potential of that person. Many leaders may not know how much they have in them until they let out their interest to the surface and find ways in which they can develop those interest into a tangible and workable plan that demonstrates the real gifts of the person.

When looking for role models in many places, one might ignore the more significant role model that is self. As much as other people have many important things they may have to instill in us, we cannot adopt them if we are unwilling to let ourselves open to learning and accept that which is being taught to us and let it be part of us.

### **You are the most important leader**

Though leaders are there to educate and show as the way, it is hard to do what is expected of us if we do not have it in our hearts to let our dreams and aspirations guide us towards fulfilling our destiny and that of those that we care for. The key to leaders' success begins by convincing

ourselves of the part that we play in achieving our dreams and them encourage others to do the same.

### **Credibility is the key foundation of Leadership**

For people to respect and want to follow the leader, the leader needs to possess qualities that attract people and encourages them to put their hopes and dreams Intune with that of their leaders. To attains people confidence, require that the leader be one that people can depend on. Followers have clear anticipations that expect their leaders, leaders need to keep in mind all the things that are important to the people they serve to make sure that they do not deviate from what they have been assigned to do.

It is through credibility that the responsibilities of the leader and that expectations follower are tied all together into a common fold. The leader works well when they already know all that is expected of them because it gives him/her the opportunity to make sure that the goal and responsibilities do not counteract with each other in the process. The way to make sure that one keeps in check is to make sure that they are aware that credibility means a lot.

Reliability matters a lot because it is what separates a great leader and a shoddy leader. People often look up to the leader that they have trust in and follow that leader in all their endeavors because they have absolute confidence that the leader will always have their back at all time which gives the guarantee to support him/her.

### **Believe it when you see it**

Values are an essential part of an organizations success. Good values guide the organization toward success because they keep all the member of the organization on a straight path by making sure that they have rules to govern every move and every decision. Part of the advantages of sound values is the fact that they drive commitment, people commit to those place

that they feel understands them. When one identifies themselves with values they see in a particular leader or organization, they think that it appeals to their spirits.

Kouzes and Posner encourage that people listen to their inner self and learn what it is that it demonstrates. When one has identified themselves and is aware of what they want out of life, then they can conclude to commit to what fits and appeals to them. The understanding of self-help an individual to self-analyze and discover themselves in a way that they can be able to measure all that they have and find out what matters the most to them. At times one compares not just themselves but also those around them.

The leader needs to know that other people matter too and things are not just about not their values but also those of their people to. The leader need not focus so much on what their interest is and forget they are in charge of people who also have values

### **Values drive commitment**

Leaders fight hard for the success of the organization when they feel committed to the organization. A leader needs to love the organization because the love guides their complete commitment to it.

### **Listen to inner self**

Sometimes the best decisions for the organization come as an internal thought. Some thoughts occur in a person that may be assumed which can be very useful if used to the organization's advantage.

### **Discover what matters**

The leader needs to know what is of value to them when they are reaching towards their objective. Knowing what's important helps the leader formulate a plan to get what their heart desires.

### **Focusing on the future sets leaders apart**

To succeed in achieving the vision of the organization, the leader and followers need to have a common interest in the organization. Common interest includes having a plan for the future. By focusing on the future, the members of the organization as a whole show that they are committed to the organization and its future success.

### **Leaders look long-term**

People do not do things just for the sake of doing them; leaders need to have a plan for their organization that proves they are committed to it. This includes laying down rules that will help the organization grow.

### **You have to spend more time in the future**

The future is always full of uncertainty. The best way to deal with the risk is by making a plan on the things that one would like to happen within the organization in the future and continue working on them and rectifying errors when unpredictable obstacles occur. Planning for the future does not guarantee success, but it promises a way ahead.

### **Insight: explore your past experience**

Past experiences are the beneficial tool in organizational development. The organization needs to examine the things that they did in the past to help them work in the future. Failures of the past help the organization explore errors made and rectify them. Success also helps by letting the leader find motivation and information on what led to the victory and use that to help with plans.

### **Outsight: Imagine the possibilities**

The leader needs to imagine the future of the organization and the opportunities they have to achieve success. Imagining may translate in the way the leader shows resilience in his/ her continued fight for organizational well-being.

**Foresight: Be optimistic**

The leader needs to be confident in the future of the organization because it will help in keeping him/her encouraged.

**You Can't do it Alone**

**You have to make a human connection**

Organizations are made up of magnitudes of people that have different ways of thinking and doing things. The leader that understands diversity knows that success is only achieved when people work together towards a common goal. Part of togetherness includes coming up with ideas of how a task is to be performed and then perform the task.

**You have to hear what people are saying**

Everybody always has an opinion about something. The best way to judge the best ideas is by listening to everybody, and in that way, one can know where those ideas are coming from and how important those ideas are to the people.

**Unite people around a shared vision**

The organization works well when people have a shared objective. When people have the same interest, they help each other achieve them and are more and more likely to influence each other positively to produce better results.

**Make others feel strong and capable**

There are times when followers feel as if they are unable to complete a task, the leaders' responsibility if such a case occurs is to help the followers believe in themselves and their ability

to succeed. Sometimes the followers may have all the drive to succeed but fail to see success in their life, and that's when the leaders push come to help them believe in themselves.

### **Bring it out of others**

The leaders' role in leading the follower to excellence is to bring out the strength in people even when they do not feel secure enough to open up. The leader can offer their assistance to the subordinate by encouraging them to open up about their ideas and when they do help them realize their dreams by motivating them and their effort.

### **Trust Rules**

Trust is the strength of any relationship. When leaders build a trusting relationship with their followers, they make the followers feel free to come to them.

### **Increase your trust, increase your influence**

The leaders that allow there to be a trusting relationship between him/her and the followers can influence followers effectively. Followers feel free to share when they trust the leader and believe that the leader has something meaningful to instill in them.

### **You have to show that you can be trusted**

The leaders that gets commitment are those that show the subordinates their generosity and has proven beyond doubt, that they can be trusted. The trust comes when the leader shows followers complete support and is willing to work with them through all their struggles and does give up when things get rough in the process.

### **Communicate with a need-to-share mentality**

It is easy to communicate when both the leader and the followers have a mental connection. A connection does not require the followers and the leader to agree all the time. What they need is for them to talk through their interest in the organization and come to a universal stand.

### **Challenge is the crucible for greatness**

When Kouzes and Posner ask people to describe experiences of personal best leadership, the responses almost always relate to situations related to challenge and change. This illustrates how important it is to view the challenge as an opportunity, rather than a threat. The seventh leadership truth is that challenge is the crucible for greatness.

Leaders view challenges differently than other people. They tend to see the opportunities that lie inside adversities and they take action needed to move things forward. This can be stressful work, and the authors reiterate that successfully leading change requires strength and resilience. Although it may be impossible to control what is occurring in the broader environment, it is possible to control one's response to the situation. Leaders must believe that they can positively influence the direction of a situation through their efforts. Even small steps can get an organization moving in the right direction.

### **Get gritty**

Many people find it hard to deal with failure by taking it to the point that they pull back. What many have come to learn after many hardships is that failing is learning. Many lessons learned from experiments and observation is that one can never improve on what works. When one fails, then is when they realize that something is not working and have the motivation to push on and achieve

### **You either lead by example, or you don't lead at all**

Leaders are the organization, they carry the burden of the organization on their shoulders, and by doing so, people have expectations that whatever the leader does is what is right for the organization and all its components. Being the head of the institution, therefore, requires that the

leader be cautious of everything they do because people will follow their action believing it's the best way to do things.

### **Seeing is believing**

To make a difference in leadership needs to start with the leaders' actions and ways of doing things. A leader that shows followers a good example can achieve many things because most times people like to see what they are required to do to believe in it. Leaders need to have a way to show followers that they can also do what they are asking of the follower.

People always watch to make sure that they are still aware of the leaders' every action. The leader on his/her part needs to make sure that their efforts are a reflection of a healthy organization and as well as a reliable and committed leader.

### **Leaders go first**

The leaders being the epitome of the organization need to spearhead the organization. To perform at their best, followers need to have an understanding of what is expected of them. The best way to help followers learn how to do the expected is by the leader being the first to do what they require of their followers.

### **Admit your mistakes**

It is a known fact to everyone that everybody makes mistakes, a leader needs to be willing to accept his/her part in an error. By admitting the mistake, the leader exhibits trustworthiness and followers find it easy to deal with the leader.

### **The best leaders are the best learners**

Learning is part of the day to day life of any individual. Good or bad, many times things happen, they bring out a learning experience. For a leader to be relevant, they need to be open to learning

in all that they do. Part of leadership achievements includes learning; learning happens when leaders let themselves

### **Learning is the master skill**

The best skills a leader can have is learning. New information and inventions always come, the leader that has an open mind to learn the new things has the best advantage because they get to fix things that are not working for a better organization.

### **Adopt a growth mindset**

When it comes to leadership, a leader that is committed to success is required to have a mind that is set to achieve growth. Commitment to growth leads to the success of the organization because leaders fight hard to ensure that all the objectives of the institution are met in the best way possible.

### **Deliberate practice is required**

Deliberate practice in leading requires that a leader continues to work hard to achieve the objective of the organizations at all times even when all seems to be too difficult to do at times. Through practice, the leader can try out new things within the organizations to ensure diversity in the workplace.

### **Support helps**

Support In the workplace is significant. People feel better and more motivated in achieving objectives when they have the assurance of having someone in their corner to support them in all they do. That support includes things like motivation, advice, autonomy and the provision of a conducive environment that gives them the materials they need to succeed within the organization.

The leader can provide the support by building projects within the organization to allow people to interact with each other socially. People tend to share their thoughts with others when they feel that the person they are giving the information to is a person that cares enough to listen and offer the advice that is needed.

### **Leadership is an affair of the heart**

Leadership is essential and relevant when one does it with a committed resolution. Leaders who have it in their heart to lead often find it easy to lead when they put their heart into it. When leaders care enough about what they do, they often use a lot of effort to make sure whatever they are interested in is met with the highest degree of determination.

Kouzes and Posner believe that leaders who perform at their best are those that show interest in their followers. The key to serving others with a clean heart is by making sure that everything one does is for the best of all.

### **Love is the soul of leadership**

Leadership is not an easy task to do. To be successful in a particular field of leadership, a leader needs to be committed to the organization because sometimes the only way a leader can engage to the organizations' well-being entirely is by having a love for what he or she wants to do in the organization.

### **Show them that you care**

The best way for followers to fight hard for the organizations' success is by knowing that they have the support of the leader. The way a leader shows support is by caring for their follower's well-being in the organization as well as in their personal lives. Caring for their own lives helps the leader to know the follower in a way that helps one understand them better.

### **Fall in love with what you do**

When working for something that a leader needs to succeed in, the leader needs to have a heart that is interested in the objective of the organizations. Interest means that the leader loves what they are doing and is willing to fight hard enough to see their project through.

### **Promote the positive**

In the need to be successful, organizations are met with hardships all the time. To deal with the hard times, the leader needs to keep a positive mind to keep his/ her followers motivated. By showing the followers that there is hope for success in all that they do, they find the strength they need to help them endure all the hard time they face in the process.

### **Truth about leadership reflection**

#### **You Make a Difference**

When it comes to leadership, there are so many factors that ought to be considered in order to successfully find a place in society. Leadership is a fundamental responsibility that requires a leader to believe in themselves first before others can believe in you. A leader's responsibility towards their followers is to make sure that what they do corresponds to what they ask others to do. Kouzes and Posner (2008) believe that whatever a leader does makes a difference the only thing to consider should be how much of a difference the leader wants to instill.

In my opinion, if you intend to be a leader you need to know yourself first as a human being to understand how to lead other people. Knowing yourself and your capabilities can help you know how to lead others in successful ways and achieve results.

In every journey, one must stumble across some roadblocks along the way while trying to make it to their destination. In the field of servant leadership, people go through a lot of

temptation that makes it difficult for them to work smoothly in serving others. Sometimes you experience loss of resources that make it difficult to find a purpose when things like that happen to keep to your commitments and be aware that even a loss often comes with again. "Loss by itself is not tragic. What is tragic is the failure to grasp the opportunity which loss presents. Any loss one's mind conceives of creates a vacuum into will come something new and fresh and beautiful, something unforeseen" (Greenleaf, & Spears 2002).

It is vital to understand what leadership means to you so that you can gauge and identify at what level you are and what you want to achieve as a leader. Sometimes we lose control over little things because we do not know make plans and arrange what goal we want to reach. When you focus on what to do, you create responsibility and awareness in everything around you. This way you can take the necessary step to be a good leader and seek a better life, making a difference, changing yourself and teaching others how to care for others and be aware of the ways you can manage and transform their lives.

Self-understanding brings harmony to the leader which serves as a leader's guideline toward self-growth and overall self-fulfillment. It enhances all the strengths the leader has and brings out all the creativity from deep within a person. Kenney, J. (2008) when leaders have reached and experienced personal transformation then they can prepare and guide their organization in achieving fundamental change.

### **Credibility is the Key Foundation of Leadership**

In leadership, credibility matters a lot. Many people feel comfortable following leaders that can be trusted at all times. A leader shows commitment to the followers by being energetic in their work and striving hard to make sure that all the responsibilities of the organization are met within the highest degree of competence. The most critical part of leaders committed to the

organization and its people is by being honest at all times. Honesty drives trust and loyalty from followers when they learn that the leader can be relied on to keep their word at all times.

Apart from honesty, the leader needs to have the values of the organization at heart to continue to reminding self and others of the reason why being in the organization means something to each and all of them. Kouzes and Posner (2010) suggest that a leader must be someone that looks ahead by having a vision for the future that involves others and makes them feel part of something important. People need to think that leaders are in it with them and that they share a common interest that is full of aspiration and visions for the future of the entire organization.

Also, the leader needs to have a good attitude and the drive to motivate his/her followers with future expectations. there is also the need for the leader be competent in the sense that he/she has a shown track record of successes and results, which generate confidence in his /her abilities. Credibility is also gained when the leader's actions are aligned with his/her words. As important as vision is, attitude is also an essential attribute for the leader to poses. The leaders' attitude is what encourages others to move forward together because it makes them have the drive to push more towards reaching their full potential. It is also vital for the leader to encourage others to move forward in all that they do within the organization

### **Values Drive Commitment**

Personal morality is put to the test when a leader is expected to choose what to do following a phone just when he had concluded a selection process for the regional manager's position. In the selection, they had narrowed to a person who is highly qualified and with the highest potential of being able to achieve all they expected of him. The dilemma comes when the

leader realizes that the personal ethics of the selected is questionable because he has tormented his wife and children to appoint that he has battered his wife and she has to move to a shelter.

Commitments mean being invested in something. A good leader needs to be focused on what they aim to achieve commitment brings strength in moving forward to achieve desired objectives. Responsibilities require a leader to never giving up on what they want even if things get hard.

### **Focusing on the Future Sets Leaders Apart**

Kouzes and Posner (2010) say that, as leaders, we need to always aware of what it is we want to achieve for the future. We need to examine ourselves and have a reflection of everything we want and put it all to God in prayer who in return gives us the desires of our hearts. Leaders that shake organizations to achieve success are those that have a vision for the future and project on how they can work hard to achieve it.

Part of the vision for the future requires not only for the leader t anticipate the success of the organization ahead of time, but it also needs the reader to have foresight for challenges that may hinder that organization from achieving the vision that they so richly desire. Kouzes and Posner state that a leader produces more success when their reasoning for future success as well as their planning for it increases. Leaders who prepare ahead of time are ahead of the game and able to couple with changes that may occur because they were already anticipating for the turbulence.

Planning for everything also helps the leader to build relationships with people that will be added resource to getting the organization out of turbulence. The leader succeeds by understanding that the success of the organization happens when the leader works well with others. Kouzes and Posner state that success is a joint responsibility. Therefore, with

commitment and unity, any organization can get through all the hardship and pull through towards the future.

### **You Can't do it Alone**

Leadership is about community and teamwork. There are ways in which a leader can find out if they make a good leader or not. Good leadership requires self- evaluation, and self-identity to help detect if the leader is efficient in their work. In self-identity, the leader needs to know how many people they impact on their work. If the leader finds that their following is minimal, then they need to question how well it is that they try to connect and involve other people in their work.

Part of the leader's interaction and involvement with people does not depend solely on the leader influencing followers. Instead, communication between leaders and followers require that the leader be one to listen also to understand something from different perspectives. Kouzes and Posner (2010) believe that the connection between the leader and followers should be in a way that both exemplify exceptional listening and understanding. That kind of listening requires that both be familiarized with each other and feel with each other.

Apart from communication and interaction, effect leader-follower relationship needs that the follower and subordinate be connected in a way that they share a common goal. Kouzes and Posner (2010) believe that people form inseparable goals when they share a common objective. The only way for followers and the leader to form a united bond is when they both believe in something so firmly that they will go to greater strength to ensure that all the objectives are met. The role of a leader in this instance is to ensure that the dream of all those people that one represents are met in the best way possible.

Leaders that are available to help them and work with the subordinates usually make others feel that they too have things to share and responsibilities to fulfill and putting in all the might to achieve all their objectives is a priority.

### **Trust Rules**

Through observation and experiences, it is a well-known fact that many people who keep constant communication and good relationship with a particular entity do so because they feel that they can depend on that organization to fulfill their needs. People that keep on coming back do so because they see the value in the organization that drives them towards the organization every time they are in need of something that organization renders. Kouzes and Posner believe that the amount of trust the leader of a particular organization brings to the table helps determine the willingness and acceptance of that organization.

Trust is something that is essential for leaders to poses because people put all their expectations on leaders which makes it necessary for leaders to know that they are required to be people who have the trust of their followers. The confidence that exists with followers helps a great deal in gaining the support and commitment of the followers. When the leader allows the followers to be autonomous under their wing, the followers are given a chance to express themselves and their horizon when at the same time gaining a name and support for the organization as a whole.

### **Challenge is the Crucible for Greatness**

Challenges are part of life and should always be taken expected and utilized in a way that they do not crumble the entire organization in the process. What one ought to learn about challenges is that they are they are part of life and every opportunity one gets to encounter them is part of a more significant learning experience. Many are times when challenges seam tough

and complicated to the point that nothing seems to work. The skills that are got from every challenge often bring with them a learning experience.

When challenges appear, the leader has a choice of how to view it as well as how to deal with it to ensure that the outcome is manageable. Though challenges can be stressful, they often turn into an advantage if people are willing to let them be something that they build on rather than making them be a challenge.

**You Either Lead by Example, or You Don't Lead at all**

Kouzes and Posner opine that the leaders that perform at their best are those leaders that lead from the heart and has the heart to do everything they can for the people and themselves. A leader that leads with love finds it in their heart to do all in their power to ensure that all the people in the organizations are happy as well as the people they provide service. When one honestly chooses from their heart, then leadership become a bit easier.

Leadership occurs with the recognition that becoming a leader or being a leader is a choice. Leading in itself is not about money, power or authority but rather by commitment, honor, and integrity. In the history of leadership, most leaders that have made a difference in the world to date have done saw by blood and sweat. Historical figures such as Dedan kimathi, Nelson Mandela, Jomo Kenyatta, Mahtama Gadthi, Martin Luther are symbols of exemplary and committed leadership that is sort after in the current generation today.

Each of the leaders mentioned above has a significant impact on people and governments, yet they never held any positions of power when starting off. All these leaders fought with everything in them to ensure that all people would be given the right to leave in a society that was safe and free leaders had a significant impact on their organization.

John Maxwell's says in many of his books that everything rises and fall on leadership. Everything the leader does whether good or bad, people will always look and observe the leader at all time, some will choose to emulate, some will criticize, and some will ignore and let it not get to them. When a leader is given the responsibility towards people, it is only wise for that leader to portray a charismatic quality that will attract and draw people towards that leader.

### **The Best Leaders are the best Learners**

In Kouzes and Posners (2010) opinion, leadership is a learning experience that requires the leader to always observe and learn from those around them. Leaders that seeks to be better in life are needed to continue devoting time and effort to learning and practicing that which they have learned to advance themselves as well as to keep up with the new trends. When leaders identify some leadership and make it work for them, they learn a lot because every step they take is a unique experience that makes them want to learn even more.

Because leadership continues day by day, experience in leadership allows leaders to learn even more from time to time. When leaders experience thing from themselves, they continue to expand their mindset and seek a new way of thinking. Kouzes and Posner suggest that the best leaders learn many things through a lot of practice and experience which in turn help improve overall performance.

Part of leadership learning can be achieved in many different ways. Though people may think that leadership is unlearnable, it can be attained through observation from others, experimentation, books, and many other forms of obtaining information.

### **Leadership is an Affair of the Heart**

Leadership in itself is complicated when the person doing the leading does not have it in their heart to lead. It can be observed many times that those leaders who always lead for the sake

of leading may have minimal chances of achieving commitment and collaboration from followers unless achieved through force or intimidation. Kouzes and Posner (2010) believe that leaders do the best work when they care about what they do.

In personal opinion how, a leader feels about the people he/ she is leading helps determine the effectiveness and commitment that leader will put towards completing the task. Apart from the commitment and the feelings toward the followers the leaders also have to have a passion for the work that he/she plans to do. Kouzes and Posner (2010) that desire is what drives the leaders' sense of commitment to the organization and its success.

For an organization to succeed leaders need to work hard in ensuring that their desires for the organization are met. When leaders have the love for the organization, they find it hard to accept failure, and that drives them to work hard in the organization for it not fail. By fighting hard for the organization other than care too sees the commitment in the leader and also struggle to help the leader succeed.

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