

# THE LAW OF THE PICTURE

People Do What People See

Great leaders always seem to embody two seemingly disparate qualities. They are both highly *visionary* and highly *practical*. Their vision enables them to see beyond the immediate. They can envision what's coming and what must be done. Leaders possess an understanding of how: Mission provides *purpose* – answering the question, *Why?* Vision provides *picture* – answering the question, *What?* Strategy provides a *plan* – answering the question, *How?*

The higher you go in leadership, the more your work is about the future. At the same time, leaders are practical enough to know that vision without action achieves nothing. They make themselves responsible for helping their followers to take action.

If you desire to be the best leader you can become, you must not neglect the Law of the Picture. As you strive to improve as an example to your followers, remember these things:

**FOLLOWERS ARE ALWAYS WATCHING WHAT YOU DO** – If you are a parent, you have probably already realized that your children are always watching what you do. Say anything you want, but your children learn more from what they see than from anywhere else. Just as children watch their parents and emulate their behaviors, so do employees watching their bosses. If the bosses come in late, then employees feel that they can, too. If the bosses cut corners, employees cut corners. People do what they see. A good supervisor is a catalyst, not a drill sergeant. He creates an atmosphere where intelligent people are willing to follow him. He doesn't command; he convinces. Nothing is more convincing than living out what you say you believe.

**IT'S EASIER TO TEACH WHAT'S RIGHT THAN TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT** – It's always easier to teach what's right than it is to do it. One of my earliest challenges as a leader was to raise my living to the level of my teaching. Norman Vincent Peale stated, "Nothing is more confusing than people who give good advice but set a bad example." I would say a related thought is also true: nothing is more convincing than people who give good advice and set a good example.

**WE SHOULD WORK ON CHANGING OURSELVES BEFORE TRYING TO IMPROVE OTHERS** – Leaders are responsible for the performance of their people. They accordingly monitor their people's progress, give them direction, and hold them accountable. And to improve the performance of the team, leaders must act as change agents. However, a great danger to good leadership is the temptation to try to change others without making changes to yourself. As a leader, the first person I need to lead is me. The first person that I should try to change is me. My standards of excellence should be higher for myself than those I set for others. To remain a credible leader, I must always work first, hardest, and longest on changing myself.

*Followers may doubt what their leaders say, but they usually believe what they do.*

*"Don't ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive and then go do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."*

Howard Thurman

*"Creativity requires the courage to let go of certainties."*

Erich Seligmann Fromm

*"Creativity is intelligence having fun."*

Albert Einstein