

THE LAW OF INFLUENCE

The True Measure of Leadership Is Influence – Nothing More, Nothing Less

What do leaders look like? Do they always *look* powerful, impressive, charismatic? And how do you *measure* the effectiveness of a leader? One of the most effective leaders of the late twentieth century was anything but impressive upon first appearance. When most people think of Mother Teresa, they envision a frail little woman dedicated to serving the poorest of the poor. That she was. But she was also a tremendous leader. I say that because she had an amazing amount of influence on others. And if you don't have influence, you will *never* be able to lead others.

True leadership cannot be awarded, appointed, or assigned. It comes only from influence, and that cannot be mandated. It must be earned. The only thing a title can buy is a little time – either to increase your level of influence with others or to undermine it.

LEADERSHIP IS...

The true measure of leadership is influence – nothing more, nothing less. “Being in power is like being a lady. If you have to tell people you are, you aren't.” Margaret Thatcher. Why do some people emerge as leaders while others can't influence people no matter how hard they try? I believe that several factors come into play:

Character – Who They Are: True leadership always begins with the inner person. People can sense the depth of one's character.

Relationships – Who They Know: You're a leader only if you have followers, and that always requires the development of relationships – the deeper the relationships, the stronger the potential for leadership.

Knowledge – What They Know: Information is vital to a leader. Knowledge alone won't make someone a leader, but without knowledge, no one can become one.

Intuition – What They Feel: Leadership requires more than just a command of data. It demands an ability to deal with numerous intangibles. In fact, that is often one of the main differences between managers and leaders. Leaders seek to recognize and influence intangibles.

Experience – Where They've Been: Experience doesn't guarantee credibility, but it encourages people to give you a chance to prove that you are capable.

Past Success- What They've Done: Nothing speaks to followers like a good track record. Every time I extended myself, took a risk, and succeeded, followers had another reason to trust my leadership ability – and to listen to what I had to say.

Ability – What They Can Do: The bottom line for followers is what a leader is capable of. They want to know whether that person can lead the team to victory. As soon as they no longer believe you can deliver, they will stop listening and following.

It's not the position that makes the leader; it's the leader that makes the position.

"Grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future, day-in, day-out. Not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years. And working really hard to make that future a reality. Grit is living life like it's a marathon, not a sprint."

Dr. Angela Lee Duckworth

"The person who sends out positive thoughts activates the world around him positively and draws back to himself positive results."

Norman Vincent Peale

"Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning."

Bill Gates