

THE LAW OF INTUITION

Leaders Evaluate Everything with a Leadership Bias

Leaders look at things differently than others do. They evaluate everything according to their leadership bias. They possess leadership intuition that informs everything they do. It is an inseparable part of who they are. Intuition is so difficult to explain because it's not concrete. It doesn't rely on just empirical evidence. The Law of Intuition depends on so much more than just the facts. The Law of Intuition is based on facts plus instinct plus other intangible factors, such as employee morale, organizational momentum, and relational dynamics.

Because of their intuition, leaders evaluate everything with a leadership bias. I regard leadership intuition as the ability of a leader to read what's going on. For that reason, I say that leaders are readers:

1. **Leaders are Readers of Their Situation** – In all kinds of circumstances, leaders pick up on details that might elude others. They 'tune in' to leadership dynamics. Many leaders describe this as an ability to 'smell' things in their organization. They can sense people's attitudes. They are able to detect the chemistry of the team. They can tell when things are humming and when they're winding down or getting ready to grind to a halt. They don't need to sift through stats, read reports, or examine a balance sheet. They know the situation *before* they have all the facts. That is the result of their leadership intuition.
2. **Leaders are Readers of Trends** – Everything that happens around us does so in the context of a bigger picture. Leaders have the ability – and responsibility – to step back from what's happening at the moment and to discern not only where the organization has been but also where it is headed. Sometimes they can accomplish this through analysis, but often the best leaders sense it first and find data to explain it later.
3. **Leaders are Readers of Their Resources** – Leaders think differently. They think in terms of resources and how to maximize them. They see a challenge, problem, or opportunity, and they think, *Who is the best person to take this on? What resources – raw materials, technology, information, and so forth – do we possess that will help us? What will this take financially? How can I encourage my team to achieve success?*
4. **Leaders are Readers of People** – President Lyndon Johnson once said that when you walk into a room, you don't belong in politics if you can't tell who's for you and who's against you. This statement also applies to any other kind of leader. Intuition helps leaders sense what's happening among the people and know their hopes, fears, and concerns. Reading people is perhaps the most important intuitive skill leaders can possess. After all, if what you are doing doesn't involve people, it's not leadership. And if you aren't persuading people to follow, you aren't really leading.
5. **Leaders are Readers of Themselves** – Finally, good leaders develop the ability to read themselves. Leaders must know not only their own strengths and blind spots, skills, and weaknesses, but also their current state of mind. When leaders become self-centered, pessimistic, or rigid in their thinking, they often hurt their organization because they are likely to fall into the trap of thinking they cannot or should not change. And once that happens, the organization has a hard time becoming better. Its decline is inevitable.

A leader has to read the situation and know instinctively what play to call.

"Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate."

Albert Schweitzer

"A smile starts on the lips, a grin spreads to the eyes, a chuckle comes from the belly; but a good laugh bursts forth from the soul, overflows, and bubbles all around."

Carolyn Birmingham

"The most wasted of all days is one without laughter."

Nicolas Chamfort