

## Leadership Commandment 2: Practice What You Preach

*Guidelines, rules, and principles to live by are just words – unless you actually live by them. To be the trusted and respected leader whom others will want to follow, you must abide by the second leadership commandment...you must: Practice What You Preach*

The second leadership commandment, *Practice What You Preach*, is a timeless guiding principle – one that’s probably just as familiar to most people as the classic “Golden Rule.” And while it’s one of the most familiar and relevant guidelines for living, it’s far, too often, overlooked and seemingly forgotten. To fully understand the phrase within the context of leadership, we need to examine and define its three component concepts: Practice, You, and Preach

- **Practice** is a pretty clear term. It means to use, do, apply, show, act, behave, or demonstrate.
- **You** actually has a dual meaning. There’s you the individual person and leader, and there is the collective you – the organization’s leadership group.
- **Preach** is the most encompassing term of the three. It’s both literal and figurative...spoken and not. And it includes...
  - Your personal beliefs and values;
  - Your organization’s stated principles and values;
  - Your organization’s policies, procedures, and rules;
  - What you say is important;
  - The things for which you hold others accountable.

Simply stated, practicing what you preach means that you DO what you expect from others...that you are ‘about’ what the organization says it is about. Leaders who practice what they preach:

- Keep their promises and honor their commitments.
- Really have an ‘open door’ policy.
- Are upbeat and positive.
- Display initiative.
- Pursue win-win outcomes.
- ‘Own’ their behaviors and ‘own up’ to their mistakes.
- Treat everyone with courtesy and respect.

### Take Away...to Remember

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