



THE ART OF LEADERSHIP

—Douglas R. Kelley, PhD, CH, CSL

Updated: September 26, 2021

Upon Completion of this Segment, You Will Know:

- Your own reasons for being a leader.
- The difference between leadership and management.
- 21 leadership mistakes managers make.
- Characteristics of good leadership.
- The difference between an empowered and disempowered team culture.
- How to empower your team.
- Leadership as a Managed, Mismanaged, and Unmanaged Process.
- The differences between three common leadership styles.

Leaders make things possible. Exceptional leaders make them inevitable.

—Lance Morrow, Journalist

Leading a team can be very rewarding, but it also takes an enormous amount of dedication and work. Being a leader/manager is not for everyone, and I will not sugarcoat the amount of time and effort you will spend tending to the myriad of details that need to be addressed. I dare say that most of your employees will never quite appreciate just how much time you invest into making your department run smoothly. But if you want something done right, you need to put in the time and effort.

This course is number one of two courses that go together. The information has been divided to make it easier to digest and manage. As you read this section on leadership and all that it entails, you may be tempted to skim through it lightly. **Don't.** This is a full blown leadership course that applies to many areas of not only your secular life, but your personal life as well. Make the commitment to read it until you comprehend it, and as you do, think of how the information relates to your own team.

Nothing is more important to the success of your organization than effective leadership. The character of any firm is only as good as its leadership. Effective leadership is about the last thing on the minds of many managers, but it should be the first thing because without good leadership, your organization will eventually fail. Without good leadership, you will not be able to truly fulfill your organization's Mission and you will undoubtedly experience more negative team member issues than you want.

As a leader, you need to set high goals, objectives, and standards for yourself and your team. Never be satisfied with the status quo! Think for yourself! Just because “that’s the way everyone else does it” doesn’t mean you have to follow suit. Only do so if it seems to make good, rational sense, and you are not bound by company policy.

Your leadership approach can mean the difference between success and failure. Right up front, you need to make a serious and long-term commitment to growing as a true leader, because if you don’t, you and your team will simply not last. Never be satisfied with mediocrity! If you are going to be a leader, then be one! Give it your all! Be among the best there are!

Defining Your Reasons for Leadership

In order to effectively lead a team, you must determine why you are doing this and where you want to go with it. The two following questions will take a little thought and it may be tempting to skip them. Please don’t. Even though you may find it somewhat difficult, ponder the following questions before continuing. You will answer them in the assignment for this segment.

1. I want to be or am a manager/leader because....
2. To me, being a successful leader means...

Leadership vs. Management

Is there a difference between leadership and management? Yes! One of my past students put it this way: “Management is *what* we are; leadership is *who* we are.” Another one of my students defined it this way: “Managers put out fires; leaders teach their people to put out fires.” The late Peter Drucker said, “Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.” Put another way, managers “make” people do things; leaders “motivate” them to do things. This concept will be expanded on in subsequent portions of this course.

21 Leadership Mistakes Managers Make

Without proper leadership training, managers may unwittingly make mistakes that only serve to alienate their employees. Take a look at the following list and check any that apply to you. If you find some, make a commitment to work on them, one at a time, until you’ve mastered each one.

1. ☐ Assuming that because the manager thinks something makes sense, everyone else should too.
2. ☐ Not communicating
3. ☐ Not delegating
4. ☐ Not allowing his/her employees to shine
5. ☐ Not giving credit where credit is due
6. ☐ Not asking for employee input or listening to employee ideas
7. ☐ Micro-Managing (always telling an employee “how” rather than “what”)
8. ☐ Not sharing the leadership
9. ☐ Being inconsistent, unpredictable, and moody
10. ☐ Not doing “Preventive Maintenance” by holding regularly scheduled feedback and coaching sessions with employees
11. ☐ Not showing employees respect and dignity
12. ☐ Yelling at employees
13. ☐ Criticizing employees in public
14. ☐ Not holding employees to accountability (allowing employees to get away with things that they shouldn’t)
15. ☐ Not enforcing company policies
16. ☐ Not getting to know employees as human beings, including employee motivations
17. ☐ Not developing themselves or their employees (includes training)
18. ☐ Being so preoccupied with getting “things” done that he/she neglects employees
19. ☐ Using subtle threats embedded in regular-sounding conversation that reminds employees that they could be fired
20. ☐ Delaying doing Performance Reviews
21. ☐ Working against human nature

A simple way to understand this is that managers manage, and leaders lead. Managers are task-focused; leaders are people-focused. And an amazing thing happens when you focus on people: the tasks all get done, and they get done better than otherwise. All managers may not be good leaders, but all leaders are good managers.

As the manager of your team, you must provide excellent leadership that they will naturally follow. This is accomplished by learning and following good leadership principles.

Incidentally, if you also happen to manage non-paid volunteers, this same information applies. Some have said that there are significant differences between managing paid employees and managing non-paid volunteers. I disagree. While there may be some minor differences, all of the leadership principles still apply. It is up to you to decide how tightly you hold to these principles as they apply to volunteers. I would suggest that you always maintain reasonableness and appropriate flexibility while using your own good judgment in all situations.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD LEADERSHIP

Many characteristics of good leadership exist, but I want to briefly focus on several practical leadership traits. Many more are peppered throughout this course. Please read the following with your own team in mind.

1. **Leaders understand and work with human nature.** Much has been written about leadership over the eons of human existence, and more will undoubtedly be written in the centuries to come. However, good leadership can be boiled down to one basic concept: Great leaders have a profound understanding of human nature and they work *with* it—not against it. Human nature is discussed in Course G140: *Metaphysical Psychology* and we will revisit it in Segment 3 of this course.
2. **Leaders are excellent communicators.** It is difficult to stress the importance of good communication in all human endeavors. The underlying factor in all human relationship problems and misunderstandings is the lack of proper and timely communication. Never forget the following principle: Lack of communication *will* kill *any* relationship. This principle is as consistent as any physical law in our universe and equally important. In the same manner that you can set your watch by the movement of the planets and stars, so too can you set your watch on this principle of communication. Stop communicating and the relationship will fail. Regular communication will help you to maintain the enthusiasm and energy of your group at a high level.
3. **Leaders are reasonable, fair, predictable, and consistent.** The quickest way to completely decimate your team's morale is to be moody and unpredictable. If today you blow up over some insignificant thing, and tomorrow you handle a major crisis with a level head, you can be certain that your team will never approach you with anything unless they absolutely have to; the lines of communication will have been broken.

To avoid this, you as a leader must learn and utilize excellent *communication* and *people skills*. This means that you need to be down-to-earth, not take yourself too seriously, and be a *Real-Live Human Being*. Far too many people take themselves too seriously. They get upset over mundane things that really don't matter in the Grand Scheme of Things. They react before fully thinking matters through. Good leaders avoid these types of negative behaviors.

As a leader, pride yourself on being fair, reasonable, and consistent in all of your dealings with others. Don't allow anyone to ever knock you off of dead center regarding your self-control and reasonable approach. Weigh things before you respond. Never react hastily.

4. **Leaders have impeccable integrity.** Integrity is defined as “adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty.”¹ Leaders are above reproach when it comes to dealing honestly and ethically with employees, colleagues, and everyone else. Leaders do not lie either by commission or omission. They do not talk about others negatively behind their backs. They always give the benefit of the doubt until there is a good reason not to do so.

Leaders with integrity strive to do the right thing for all concerned. They have a moral compass that always points in an ethical direction. They practice the principle, “Do no harm.”

5. **Leaders share their leadership.** Leaders are neither control freaks nor micro-managers. They share their leadership by getting others involved and displaying good communication skills. Shared leadership is all about involvement and communication, being open to ideas, delegating meaningful tasks that can potentially help others grow and give them a sense of accomplishment. Leaders share their leadership by getting feedback from employees as well as allowing them to be part of the decision-making process when appropriate. Shared leadership spreads the control and promotes a healthy team environment in which employees can take pride. It mitigates the *Entitlement Attitude* so pervasive in the world today.
6. **Leaders succeed by helping others to succeed.** This concept must permeate your entire perspective! If you want to succeed as a leader, then you must help your individual team members to also succeed. This means different things to different people. People only do the things they see a benefit in doing. This includes you and your employees. Your definition of success will likely differ from your employees. In order for you to succeed, you must define what “success” as a leader means to you (you did this step above). Likewise, in order to help your employees succeed, you need to know how they define “success” as it relates to being on the team. How do you find out? Ask them! Ask them how you can help them to succeed in their respective positions, and then work to help them succeed.
7. **Leaders develop themselves.** The concept of a “natural born leader” is largely a myth. While it is true that some people are naturally gifted in leadership qualities, effective leaders have educated themselves in a variety of areas including human nature and effective people skills.

The American Heritage® Dictionary defines the word “entropy” as, “the tendency for all matter and energy in the universe to evolve toward a state of inert uniformity.” Entropy is the universal phenomena in which things revert back to a state of inert matter, in other words, things go back to the dust. Put another way, entropy involves the tendency for things to gravitate from a state of order to a state of disorder. When applied to human development, entropy means: *If we are not growing, we are dying*. Some say that this is stagnation, which is true. But stagnation is just a slow form of death.

Effective leaders are on a continual quest for knowledge, experience, personal growth, and enlightenment. While many people think self-improvement is too hard and therefore rarely do it, leaders don't shrink back from investing in themselves by way of continuing education. The very fact that you have enrolled in this course is evidence of your desire to grow! Be a sponge for personal growth! Strive for Greatness; don't settle for mediocrity!

¹ Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1). Based on the Random House Unabridged Dictionary, © Random House, Inc. 2006.

8. **Leaders replicate themselves by developing others.** If you want to have better employees, teach them life skills. Coach them in effective communication skills. Train them how to be top-shelf employees and emphasize the sense of pride that comes from being such. Help them to think for themselves regarding their duties to the extent that doing so doesn't conflict with organizational policy. Having a great team doesn't just happen; you have to create it by coaching and developing your employees in an assertive manner over time. Continuing education is a philosophy that should be part of your team and organizational culture.

By developing and training your team, you, in essence, replicate yourself. Your objective is to have competent and capable employees who can and will perform necessary tasks and procedures with minimum supervision. This allows a team to work together without unnecessary friction.

Aspects of these traits and many others will be explored and expanded upon in the pages to follow. In addition, several other courses bear on leadership including Course G70 on the *Life Leadership Paragon™*, Courses G100 and G110 on communication skills, Courses G80 and G90 on relationship skills, and Course G130 on goals, time management, and problem solving. You will be successful as a leader only to the extent that you absorb and apply these traits and skills. If you have not taken these courses, it is recommended that you do so before completing this course. It will help broaden your foundation for this leadership certification course.

HOW TO EMPOWER YOUR EMPLOYEES AND MAINTAIN AN EMPOWERED TEAM CULTURE

We often hear of a corporation's "culture," which essentially means their philosophy and approach to doing business. When asked what the word "culture" means, most people say "environment," which is true. Let me share with you an easier definition of the word, "culture:" "It's the way we do things around here." To understand this better, consider that even regional cultures exist in different countries. For example, in various regions of the United States, people generally refer to soft drinks as "soda" (Northeast), "coke" (South), "pop" (West and Midwest), and "tonic" (some New England areas).

Some organizational cultures are healthy, some are not. Consider your own team's culture. Is it "empowered?" or "disempowered?" Regardless of your answer, how can you empower your team members and either transform or enhance your team culture?

The answer is that you have to give them something in particular. It is certainly true that you must show them kindness, respect, dignity, honor, appreciation, and recognition (to name a few), but there is one extremely important thing that you must give them to empower them: *Control*. And more accurately, *appropriate control*. We will discuss the human need for control in the next two chapters; however, suffice it to say that we all have a need for control. When we feel a loss of control, it leads to stress and poor relationships. When we hoard control by being "control freaks," it disempowers us and others. People will stop dealing with us eventually and we will ultimately crash and burn.

Giving your employees *appropriate control* is a part of *shared leadership*. It doesn't mean that you act stupidly by dumping and running; it means that you give as much control to your team as is reasonably possible. All of us feel much better when we have a sense of control over our life and surroundings.

So, to empower your team, give them appropriate control. Share the leadership. Don't be a control freak demanding that *everything* is done your way. While there will certainly be some things that need to be done in a specific manner, there will also be other things that don't really matter.

Work *with* human nature; not against it. By so doing, you will establish a healthy and empowered team culture.

LEADERSHIP AS A PROCESS

Leadership can be a Managed, Unmanaged, or Mismanaged process. The dictionary defines the word “process” as, “A series of actions taken to achieve a result.” It is a fact of life that if you want a certain result, you must follow a specific process. For example, if you want to harvest corn, you must go through the process of planting corn (not wheat). Then you must cultivate and water it, as well as provide pest prevention. If the process is correct, you will get the desired results.

Leaders/managers, of course, desire certain results out of employees, such as punctuality, showing up consistently, and doing the work properly. However, far too many managers don’t fully appreciate that their own day-to-day behavior and leadership approach (or lack thereof) can have a dramatic impact on getting what they want from employees.

The chart on the last page below generally describes the processes of Unmanaged, Mismanaged, and Managed Leadership. It also shows the effective results of each process. As you examine the chart, ask yourself which process best describes you.

Once you have studied the chart, ponder some of the following conclusions:

- If you want certain results, you must go through a certain process.
- All processes net specific results.
- Assertive Leadership means focusing mutually on yourself and your employees.
- If you want to transform a disempowered team into an empowered team, give them “Appropriate Control.”
- The more you understand and work with human nature, the more empowering your leadership will be.
- Effective Leadership starts with you developing you!
- **Morale is directly related to the quality of the manager’s supervision and leadership!**

What about you? Ponder these questions:

- Where do you think you fall on the chart? Which process best describes your approach?
- Where would your employees say you fall on the chart? Which process would they say best describes your approach?
- Which areas of your approach could use some refinement? (Why not choose an area, work on it diligently for a week, and then move on to another area?)

The following audio will help you to better understand *Leadership as a Process* and the following chart below.

Segment 1 Supplemental Audio: *Leadership (with Chart Discussion)*



NOTE: Before proceeding to the next section, please listen to the audio above on the *Course Page* for a supplemental discussion of this section. This audio is part of the course.



LEADERSHIP AS A PROCESS™ AT A GLANCE © 2007 Kelley Training Systems, Inc.			LEADERSHIP AS:				
			An Unmanaged Process (Passive)	A Mismatched Process			A Managed Process (Assertive)
				Aggressive	Passive-Aggressive	Codependent	
P R O C E S S	1.	Motto	I Lose, You Win	I Win, You Lose	I Win, You Lose (Eventually)	I Win if You Win	I Win, You Win
	2.	Outward Focus	People (Unhealthy)	Tasks	People (Unhealthy)	People (Unhealthy)	People (Healthy)
	3.	Inward Focus	Self	Self	Self	Self	Mutual
	4.	Management Style	Under-Involved; Under-Supervises	Dictatorial; Over-Supervises	Unpredictable Supervision	Passive Controlling Supervision; Overloaded	Fair, Balanced
	5.	Control	Employees (Inappropriate)	Manager (Total Control)	Ultimately Manager	Employees (Inappropriate)	Shared (Appropriate Control)
	6.	Manager's Communication Style	Tentative, Withheld	Abrasive, Direct, Demanding	Indirect	Direct or Withheld	Direct, Considerate
	7.	Delegation	Reverse Delegation	Command & Control	Direct	Reverse Delegation	Fair, Developmental
	8.	Professional Development Attitude	Low Priority	Low Priority	Low Priority	Low Priority	High Priority (Self and Employees)
	9.	Manager's Coaching Approach	None	None	None or Irregular	None or Irregular	Deliberate, Regular
	10.	Handling Employee Problems	Crisis Basis	On Demand	Crisis Basis	Crisis Basis	Preventive, Pre-emptive
R E S U L T S	11.	Corporate Culture/Environment	Chaotic	Repressive	Distrustful / Suspicious	Chaotic	Empowering
	12.	Employee Behavior/Performance Problems	Rampant	Substantial but Concealed	Rampant	Rampant	Few, if Any
	13.	Employee Attitude	Entitlement	Entitlement	Entitlement	Entitlement	Ownership, Buy-In
	14.	Employee Negativity	High	Very High	High	High	Low or Non-Existent
	15.	Morale	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
	16.	Employee Absenteeism	High	Low	Moderate	High	Low
	17.	Rank & File Employee Turnover	Low	High	Moderate	Low	Low
	18.	Employee/Team Productivity	Low	Ultimately Low	Low	Low	High
	19.	Safety & Accidents Risk	Moderate to High	High	High	Moderate to High	Low
	20.	Cost to Bottom Line	High	High	High	High	Low
	21.	Basic Message Sent:	Walk on Me	I'll Walk on You	I'll Walk on You Eventually	I'll Walk on Me for You	I Won't Walk on You, nor Allow You to Walk on Me