

GST 224

LEADERSHIP SKILLS



LESSON 3

What are Leadership Skills?

Leadership skills are the tools, behaviors, and capabilities that a person needs in order to be successful at motivating and directing others. It also involves the ability to help people grow in their own abilities.

Qualities of a good leader

1. A good leader should be understand the needs of his followers and organization
2. A good leader should be reasonable and considerate
3. A good leader should be impartial and fair
4. A good leader should be bold and courageous
5. A good leader should be honest, sincere and trustworthy
6. A good leader should be able to make articulate judgment
7. A good leader should be firm and not unstable
8. A good leader should be resourceful and inspirational
9. A good leader should be committed and devoted
10. A good leader should be should be visionary.

Qualities of a good follower

1. A good follower should be loyal to the organization and leader
2. A good follower should be obedient to the leaders and the organization's rules & regulations
3. A good follower should be respectful to those in position of leadership
4. A good follower should be co-operative with fellow followers and assist the leader(s)
5. A good follower should perform his/her duties and responsibilities promptly
6. A good follower should be able to offer constructive criticism when necessary
7. A good follower should be highly committed to the vision and mission of the organization
8. A good follower should be hardworking and diligent
9. A good follower should be devoted and dedicated
10. A good follower should listen to instructions and pay attention to details.

Traits of a successful leader

Basically, there are three (3) required traits to be a successful leader namely; the desire to lead, commitment to the mission and vision of the organization, and integrity.

The desire to lead: A successful leader should basically have the desire to lead other people. There are a number of characteristics that determines one's level of desire to lead.

- i. Enjoys it hen others seek one's ideas or opinions
- ii. Don't mind asking people challenging questions when working on a project
- iii. Supporting others in good and bad times
- iv. Putting team interest before one's interest
- v. Facilitating a strong team spirit when working in a group
- vi. Sharing ideas with people for their own use and benefit
- vii. Coaching others in improving their skills
- viii. Helping to resolve conflict between people
- ix. Celebrating other people's success
- x. Generating meaningful ideas and sharing it with the group.

Commitment to the mission and vision of the organization: Most societies and organizations have pioneer leaders who in most cases had a mission and a vision when the organization was created. A successful leader should basically know and be committed to the mission and the vision of the organization.

Integrity: According to Dwight D. Eisenhower, the supreme quality for a leader is unquestionable integrity. Integrity is needed to be a successful leader. Integrity can be defined simply as being true to your word, authentic in your actions and speech, and demonstrating the kind of behavior that you would like to see your followers have. Integrity is a trait leaders ought to exhibit and practice. The benefits a leader can gain from developing integrity are enormous when compared to the damage that the lack of integrity can cause.

Lack of integrity by a leader can lead to: favouritism, dishonoring promises made, gossiping, treating people disrespectfully, and taking all the credit for the follower's hard work.

Key areas to concentrate on when developing integrity

1. Sincerity: It is also called authenticity. A leader should demonstrate this facet of integrity by:
 - Accepting responsibility for his/her commitments and strive to meet them
 - Accepting responsibility for his/her mistakes
 - Being honest about his/her own limitations
 - Telling the truth
 - Not putting up a false front
2. Consistency: A leader should develop this facet of integrity by:
 - Treating his/her followers equally as much as possible
 - Following through on promises
 - Working as hard or harder than his/her followers
 - Having the same expectations or rules for themselves as for their followers.
3. Substance: refers to integrity becoming part of who you are exhibited in your work relationships by:
 - Keeping follower's personal information private
 - Not complaining about team members to other team members
 - Not being selfish
 - Giving credit where credit is due
 - Maintaining clear communication and conflict resolution
 - Genuinely caring about the development of followers

Criteria for leadership choice

1. The ability of the individual to perform: This is usually assessed from the person's previous experience(s). This is associated with the maxim – 'tested and trusted'.
2. The personal qualities of the individual: This involves attributes like; temperament, comportment, charisma, confidence, etc.