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The nine P's of leadership reflect the practices of the best of the best leaders, practices that I personally used while leading an advertising and marketing organization.

Not surprisingly, it starts with people.

Nine P's of Leadership



People

We've observed great leaders, past and present, who have a high self-esteem, are courageous and, in areas where they're less than A+, surround themselves with people smarter than they. They demand push-back on their views; they abhor and replace "yes men and women!"

Jack Welch, Bill Gates and Sandy Weill - they accomplished extraordinary things because they knew then...as they practice today...it's about recruiting and developing a team imbued with passion and the courage to fight for their ideas in line with the purpose of the organization. Michael Porter, Harvard Business School Professor, says, "People are more important than strategy!"

Jeff Rich, former CEO of ACS, offers this non-leader image. "I call them shade trees. They're huge, soak up all the sunshine coming down on their organization and don't let the credit go below them." Bill Toppeta, President of Met Life's International Division, said, "Focus on people and the numbers will come, focus on numbers and the people will go."

Myrtle Potter, ex-COO of Genentech, said, "You get accolades, money, recognition. But, at the end of the day, if you're not teaching people what you know, what good are you as a leader? Our number one obligation is to put people in a position to lead on their own."

Purpose

The vision. Leaders, like Bill Gates, build a mental bridge that their people can see, embrace and cross. To succeed, the bridge must be differentiated from any other. But it has to be passable and real, or your folks won't buy into its structure.

Real leaders dare to be different! To sell their purpose, they capitalize on what's unique about themselves and their thinking. Herb Kelleher of Southwest Airlines said,



"Let's hire for attitude and train for skill."

Check it often - Is it still vital? If not, change it to make it so.

Why do you work where you do today? Do you buy into its vision? Is there a vision or purpose?

Passion

Great leaders are passionate. Intel's Andy Grove repeatedly spoke to his people about purpose. At GE University, Jack Welch spoke for a half day every other week. Phil Satow of JDS Pharmaceuticals started a firm and

foundation in memory of the son who took his own life.

Howard Schultz of Starbucks said, "The ability to get people to think passionately and do things as if they own the business can only be achieved when they are truly part of the business." That's why Schultz provides his employees with health benefits, stock options and a retirement plan—even part-timers.

Passionate leaders focus on the outcome, not what they're going through. Rule #1 of Lionel Nowell, SVP and Treasurer of Pepsico - "Maintain ownership and who and what you are. Young people need to be challenged; not to limit themselves." His conclusion: "I can overcome anything; so can you."

To exude "passion, it's okay to show your weaknesses. It's okay to say, "I made a mistake." Nobody wants a perfect leader. Talk about your goofs. You'll build collaboration and underscore your human side.

Finally, passion is about the job, your company and the desire to do it better than it's ever been done; to build a legacy. If it doesn't work for you in your present job, get out and find something about which you can be passionate. Cash out or drift out and move to something you can embrace and make a difference.

Persistence

"No" is only for today...fight for a "yes" tomorrow. Edison failed 2,000 times before he found the filament, socket and wiring for the light bulb. John Chambers overcame dyslexia to build Cisco. Jack Welch stutters. Leaders never quit - they find another path, another contact, another point of entry, another day.

Persistence doesn't mean banging your head against the wall; it means persevere until the right idea or solution is found, and, once discovered, mastered.

Can you remember when you failed the first time around? Did you quit and move on, or did you battle for that second opportunity? It takes courage and a masterful will to suck it up and try it again. If it's worthwhile, do it and do it again - and win!

The 9/11 New York Fire Department Commissioner and hero Tom Von Essen says it was about putting one foot in front of another and doing the best he could. "What was



I supposed to do, quit?"

Silent Calvin Coolidge said it best, "Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than 'unsuccessful' men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated morons. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. Those two words - press on - have solved and will always solve the problems of the human race."

Performance

You can be great looking and dress magnificently in your Armani suit. But if you can't make the bottom line, if you can't beat out your competitors, if you can't walk the talk; you're through. Bob Walter of AT&T says, "They'll throw you out for the person who buys bad suits from Syms, is overweight and has bad breath. They want people with principles and perspective who deliver on the goals and consistently build A+ teams."

When you think performance, practice the five "to do's":

- Never leave a task until it's A+.
 - Redo daily the "to-do" list.
 - Check messages at a specified time.
 - Close the door.
- Enjoy your work and curb the number of meetings. Raul Cesan, who drove Schering-Plough's Claritin to a \$3.5-billion brand, offers the following:
- Sense of urgency - If you don't get it done because it feels too hard, your competitor will find the way to do it.

- Focus - Don't get distracted.
- Innovation - Find better ways to interrupt the market and beat your competition.
- Teamwork - Forget hierarchy and share the resources.
- Communication - Keep it open among team members.
- Accountability - Take ownership and personal responsibility for the project.
- Decentralization - Streamline the operation; keep bureaucracy and paperwork to a minimum.

Perspective

Getting the best out of your people. I define it as the practice of seeing people and situations from multiple vantage points. Become a sensor. Develop an internal radar modem. Detect what's going on around you without others spelling it out for you. Be sensitive to the looks and voice of your family members, your friends, your peers and your people.

We're not born with perspective. They'll always be some angle we didn't see with clarity. The founders of great wisdom traditions teach us: "To know how much we do not know is the beginning of wisdom." The key is to hone your intuitive skills daily and have the common sense to see broadly and put that intuition into practice.

Jeff Rich, CEO of ACS, said, "The day your people stop bringing you their problems is the day you stop leading. They've concluded you don't care or that you can't help them."

Real leaders with a healthy sense of perspective pause, take a deep breath, figure out their priorities, rank them and execute them from "most important" to "can wait."

Paranoia

Someone out there is forging a bullet right now with your name on it! You've got to find him before he finds

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you. Ex-CEO Jeff Bleustein of Harley, whose sales shot up 15 percent and earnings grew 26 percent, says, "We have to pretend ten fiery demons are chasing us all the time." He continually warns employees of his twin fears - arrogance and complacency.

Randy Thurman, a former top-gun pilot and a TG instructor, explained that TG pilots have to be faster, more observant, more aware and more paranoid than their adversaries. To become a fighter pilot, you have to make it through the OODA loop (Observe - Orient - Decide - Act). The USAF found that fighter pilots got the loop

much faster than traditional pilots. Paranoia is the deciding straw. There's no margin of error in a dogfight, Randy explained.

Yes, great leaders are paranoid. They know their strategies and outcomes, and they race to cash them in before the jewel thieves steal them.

What's your business paranoia?

P principles

And, of course, as you would expect, you'll never have followers unless you have integrity and credibility - principles. You don't learn this P - You live it every day. It's your human genome. It's your "self." You can be called CEO, Senator, Dean or President, and your constituents will be forced to listen and unwillingly nod approval. But they'll never really follow unless they sense your principles, your ethics and your moral fortitude.

The days of the likes of Ken Lay (Enron), Bernie Ebbers (Worldcom), Dennis Kozlowski (Tyco) and Richard Scrushy (HealthSouth) aren't over. The trial of governance is just beginning. The next part is: how do we govern the governance? How do we excise the greed and nonchalance of board members who allow these atrocities to happen? How do we turn this gargantuan battleship around into the ocean of trust? How do you deal with the realism of being short of sales quota or missing the quarterly analyst's guidance? Are you mentally prepared? Are you prepared to say to your board, "We're going to do the right thing?" Principles are not a short-term action.

Senator Glenn described it this way. "There are times when you devote yourself to a higher cause than personal safety." Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient Frances Hesselbein said, "Our values are woven from the innermost stands of our lives."

We must think of principles not as a noun but as a verb - an action word; not to be dusted off once a year, but a practice to act out every day.

P practice

This P never ends.

Michael Jordan logged more practice hours than any other NBA player in history. JFK rehearsed his inaugural address more than any other president before or since. Why? These leaders understood that practice breeds greatness. We have ideas of perfection, but we can never execute perfection 100 percent. Jordan came close. Kennedy nearly had it in, "Ask not what your country can do for you..."

If you're not willing to practice the P's, you won't be around long. When Jordan missed his jumper too many times, he became history. When you stop practicing, you stop leading. It's about maintaining focus and reviewing priorities daily. It's not leaving till it's done - A+!

Practice transforms a person. It makes the mind and body relate to the world in a new way. This is true for a dancer, musician, athlete or physicist, and it's cer-



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tainly true for a leader. Remember, leadership is labor intensive.

At their heart, people want a practice in which they can believe and follow.

The great leaders we know never catch perfection, but they try. They give it all the effort they have. They work to learn something new everyday. Do you?

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