



Learning to Lead (Revision date 1/8/2013)

The ultimate responsibility of a leader is to facilitate other people's development as well as his own. Perhaps more than anything else, leadership is about the creation of a new way of doing things. By being a leader, you are creating the environment that you are in. The responsibility for making it better rests on you. In many situations, the only way to get the ball rolling in the right direction is for you to push it yourself. Good leadership improves everything. Leaders are lifters. They elevate others performance and make them better than before.

Leaders also have a great responsibility. They must first model excellence. Notice how great leaders always model behavior that has a high return. People do what people see. The best way for people to learn what you expect of them is to model it yourself. A good leader never expects others to do what they themselves are not willing to do.

If you choose to start a Tea Party group, be prepared to be a leader. In my business of consulting, I have gone into businesses where the owner claims that he or she just is not a natural leader and that is why they have so much dysfunction in their company. My reply to them is that since they chose to own their own business, then they also made a conscious choice to lead. If they do not know how, then it is time to learn. Anyone can learn to lead, if you are willing to change.

Some may wonder if it is possible to teach "old dog's new tricks." While it may be difficult to adapt to change your style or thinking, it is not impossible. You will become on the outside what you believe on the inside. Will this change be risky? Probably; but would you rather live with the pain of risk or the pain of regret?

When you begin your group, get a few close associates together that you trust and who will encourage you. You need to surround yourself with positive people who share your passion and commitment to excellence. They need to be your "fire lighters." Those who will help you with the fire that is in you to take back your country. You need those who will be there in the up times as well as the down times. You need to surround yourself with those who will give you guidance and counsel when you need it.

If you have ever built a fire, then you know that its natural tendency is to go out. If you want to keep a fire hot, you need to feed it and protect it. Not everyone in your group will do that for you when it comes to your passion and your mission. There are two kinds of people, "fire fighters," who will throw cold water on the fire of passion and "fire lighters," who will go out of their way to help you keep your fire hot.

Here are some "fire fighter" phrases: "That's not practical." "We tried that before and it didn't work." "We've never done this before." "Yeah, but..." "That's not the way we do it." "It will never work." "Who will do all the extra work?" "I'm tired of working for nothing."

If you find yourself around "fire fighters," here is some food for thought. If you think you are beaten, you are. If you think that you dare not, you do not. If you would like to win, but think you cannot, it is most certain that you will not. Life's battles do not always go to the stronger or faster, but sooner or later, the one who wins is the one who thinks they can.

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As a leader, you need to be productive. After all, you cannot steer a parked car. Know where you want to go and get started. If you wait for the car to start on its own, nothing will happen. If you want to get moving, you must reach out, insert the key, and turn it.

As I mentioned earlier, you will experience times of great joy and accomplishment as well as discouragement and fatigue. You will have times of great unity and times of dissension. Leadership will carry you through these times.

Sometimes you may feel like a wind-up toy with a sensor in front, so that whenever it bumps into something it turns 30 degrees and starts again. However, notice that if you put that toy in a room it will always find its way out because every time it hits a wall it turns and starts again. On the other hand, some toys hit the wall, stall, and then run out of battery. We need to be like the first toy and keep persevering. The price of leadership is one worth the cost because in the end, you will be responsible for raising the bar for so many who could not have arrived where they are without you.

Being a leader will take you out of your comfort zone. You will never know what you are capable of until you try to go beyond what you have done before.

What is a Leader? A leader who will develop other leaders?

- The true level of leadership is measured by influence. Nothing more and nothing less. Are you influencing others and are they following you? Look around. If no one is following you, perhaps you need to follow a true leader.
- Anyone can drive a car, but it takes a leader to plan the trip. A leader is not afraid to LEAD.
- When a leader speaks, others listen.
- Leaders are trusted by their followers.
- Leaders naturally follow leaders stronger than themselves. They constantly are looking to others for their growth so that they can help those following them to grow.
- A leaders potential is determined by those closest to him. What kinds of people do your surround yourself with?
- Only secure leaders give power to others. A true leader gives power away so that others can develop and grow. They want their group to grow by multiplication to make an impact beyond their own reach.
- Leaders are positive, shun negativity, and always find a way to win.
- Leaders understand that “activity” is not necessarily “accomplishment.”
- Leaders share the successes with the team and take sole responsibility for the failures.
- Leaders desire excellence and will settle for nothing less.
- Leaders are kind with their words.
- Leaders share responsibility and never “go it alone.”
 - Those you surround yourself with will determine the potential of the group.
 - Your relationships will determine the morale of your group.
 - The organizational structure of your group will determine its size.
 - Vision will determine the direction of your group.
 - Leadership will determine its success.
- Leaders focus on others strengths and encourage their use of their strengths.



- A true leader “works themselves out of a job” when others around them become equipped to step into their shoes.

What a leader IS NOT

- A leader is not a person who needs to be needed.
- A leader does not focus on others weaknesses.
- A leader does not treat individuals unfairly or inequitably.
- A leader does not hoard power.
- A leader is not arrogant or abrasive.
- A leader does not criticize others efforts or judge motives.
- A leader does not lord their authority over others.
- A leader does not expect others to do what they will not do themselves.

Developing leaders is difficult but rewarding. True leaders will attract other leaders that may just need that little investment of time to become a great leader themselves. Leaders are hardworking, energetic, and even entrepreneurial. They will “multiply” rather than just “add” to their group.

Leadership is not an “add-water-and-stir” proposition. It takes time, energy, and resources. It demands commitment. It requires determination. It teaches us patience. It stretches us. It compels us to rise to a higher personal level. It gives back much more than we ever can give.

Leading in Your Neighborhood

How do you lead in your neighborhood when you do not even know who they are? How do you lead when you do know them or feel afraid to mention “politics” to them?

There has not been a better time than right now to bring up politics. We are faced with the largest intrusion of government into the private sector in the history of our nation. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike are concerned about this over reach of the federal and state governments.

As Tea Party activists, we can attract people from all sides of the aisle. Remember, our stated mission is, limited government, fiscal responsibility and constitutionally limited government. Very few will disagree with that. That statement is non-partisan as well as inviting.

Never “assume” that this topic is taboo. Consider this fact. In California, a very politically active state, only 5% of registered voters participate in the selection of their government. Those individuals are considered “activists” and would include door-to-door walkers, from the right and the left, precinct captains, campaign headquarter workers and those who would volunteer on a phone bank. Most individuals who vote just participate in picking someone who has already been picked for them.

As you talk, be sure that you know your facts and do not do any name-calling directed at the opposition. As Tea Party activists, we can easily stay focused on our three-pronged mission of fiscal responsibility, constitutionally limited government, and free markets. We do not need to get side tracked with arguments about moral issues, guns, military, gay rights or abortion. These issues will divide us. We also know that our three mission goals are like the steering wheel of the car; all those issues that are near and dear to our hearts are in the back seat of that car and will fall into place.



Staying focused is important. Simply, calmly, professionally and confidently state the case of truth and freedom forever. Granted, when you stand for truth, you will meet with opposition. Remember, we are going to speak the truth in a caring way. You are not there to win a popularity contest, you are there to be like Paul Revere and warn them of our coming doom if people do not understand what is happening right before their eyes. If you doubt if you should or should not talk to your neighbor or friend then ask yourself, "What is my motive?" If it is to win a debate, then maybe you should remain quiet. If it is because you care about your country and what will happen to your neighbor or friend, then it is your duty to talk to them. It is not your duty to change their mind or heart, just present them with the truth; the rest is up to them.

Leading in Your Community

Most Americans remain convinced that the country is on the wrong track. They know that something is not quite right. The problem they face is that they do not know how to respond to it and have no clue how to stop it. Moving into your community can open many doors that will help them understand that their fears are well founded and you will be able to give them answers to questions that they have.

Places that invite speakers to come in can provide wonderful opportunities to tell them about Tea Party groups and our mission. Some of these organizations may include Sir Optimist, Optimist, Rotary Club, Lyons, and other business networking groups, etc.

If you find yourself invited to speak to a group be sure that you go prepared so that you are comfortable with your information. Keep to your message and remain focused. Do not ramble and be sure to have only two or three basic points that you expound on. Ask how much time you have and stick to the time line. Be sure to answer the questions, "How does this affect me?" and "What can I do with what I have learned?" Definitely, avoid talking about yourself unless it is an illustration for learning purposes.

A good first step to open with would be a quote from our Founding Fathers. Words have consequences and the words and ideas that those men shared were revolutionary. It is not time to dissolve the bands that connect us to one another, but it is time to dissolve the political bands that separate us from one another. We can disagree on politics, but we all call ourselves Americans. On that, we can agree.

Not everyone will be asked to speak to a group, nor will everyone feel comfortable speaking publicly. That is okay. Other community opportunities can occur when shopping, while at the beauty salon or barber shop, sporting events or other large social community gatherings. Do not force doors to open, but do not miss one either. When asked, be prepared to give an answer as to what and why you believe what you believe. It is all about being prepared.

To reiterate, if you do not like to speak publically, that does not mean that you cannot be a great leader. After all, President Eisenhower readily admitted that public speaking was not his forte. Addressing an audience one day, he told the following story:

"A neighboring farmer had a cow that he wanted to sell. We went over to visit the farmer and asked him about the cow's pedigree. The old farmer did not know what pedigree meant, so we asked him about the cow's butterfat production. He told us that he did not have any idea what it was. Finally, we asked him if he knew how many pounds of milk the cow produced each year. The farmer said, 'I don't know. Nevertheless, she is



an honest cow and she will give you all the milk she has'. I said, "I'm like the cow. I'll give you everything I have." What a simple yet profound illustration on commitment and leadership.

Leading in Your State

There are varieties of ways that you can show leadership on the state level. There are statewide rallies that you could help to coordinate. Even targeted areas, such as representatives' offices or media locations could be a way that you can show leadership.

Another idea is to make appointments with your State Representatives to tell them, face to face, what you think about certain issues and their stands on those issues. Be sure that the issues you want to discuss pertain strictly to your state and are in your representative's jurisdiction.

In order to be credible when meeting with your Representative, be sure to go there informed with facts and not emotion. This will keep you from "rambling" or going off on rabbit trails that dilute your main message and prevent you from making your point. Passion is one thing, becoming emotional is another. You need to stay calm and focused.

Some key things to be aware of; first, be on time. Nothing destroys credibility more than being late for a meeting. Dress appropriately, namely, casual office attire. Patriotic T-shirts are great for rallies and meetings but not so when you go to meet your Representative. Remember, you will have more impact with your knowledge of the issues than making a statement with a slogan on a T-shirt. First impressions are lasting and it is hard to overcome a bad first impression. Make yours professional and respectful.

Taking a step like this will definitely require some courage. Remember, courage is not the absence of fear; rather it is the ability to take action in the face of fear. Courage is doing what you are afraid to do. There cannot be courage unless you are scared. One of the most courageous things you can do is identify yourself, know who you are, what you believe in, and where you want to go.

Lastly, never be afraid to help others in your state get Tea Party groups set up in their area. You may feel that you are sticking your neck out to help someone else in this way. Well, behold the turtle. He makes progress only when he sticks his neck out. Remember, people are moved by highly motivated people, by enthusiasts, by men and women who want something very much or believe in something passionately. Your willingness to help others get started will not be a sacrifice. It will be an exhilarating experience because it is an intense effort applied toward a meaningful end.

You do not need to spend an exhaustive amount of time helping them get started. Show them what you have done. If you lead a group, tell them how you got started and help them with their first meeting. If you have been attending meetings, you can show them what is done in your meetings and how your leader follows up with you and others in your group and how they provide information on important issues. You could also invite them to attend one of your group meetings so they get a feel for what is going on and then help from that point.

Opportunities to help are limited only by our own imagination. People want to be involved. Most people just need encouragement and to be shown what to do. Few things in the world are more powerful than a positive push. A smile! A word of optimism and hope. A "you can do it." This is verbal sunshine!



Leading on the National Level

Leading on the national level is similar to the state level but may require a little more creativity. Creativity is especially expressed in the ability to make connections and associations that will turn things around and express them in a new way. This will involve taking what you have, where you are, and getting the most out of it. It is the natural extension of your enthusiasm.

National involvement may be helping coordinate national rallies such as the one in Washington DC on September 12, 2009. That required the efforts of many and it paid off tremendously.

Other ways to lead nationally would also include going to meet with your two Senators and/or the Representative from your district to the House of Representatives. The same rules apply here as with meeting those on your state level. Know and understand the facts about the issue you want to discuss, be on time, and dress appropriately. My suggestion would be to talk about one issue at a time. Stay focused, be informed, and by all means, be professional.

Be sure that the issue you discuss is of a national nature or how your state will be affected if certain national legislation is enacted. Be specific and clear. State only facts and stay away from the emotions. Be clear that you will support them if you agree but you will work against them if you disagree with their voting record. You want to say this with a friendly smile.

Other ways to influence those across the nation would be by making phone calls to members of committees that are working on legislation that you agree or disagree with. Even if they are from another state, you can let them know that you want or do not want a certain piece of legislation passed. Inform them that if you disapprove of their voting record you will donate to their opponent in the next election.

Lastly, you can also contact the White House and let your voice be heard about issues that are slated for vote and the President's signature. It is crucial that we all understand the power of our vote and our voice.

Silence is not golden. Silence is saying that what is going on is all right with you. If you do not stand for something, you will fall for anything. I believe that a person ought to know what he believes, why he believes it and then believe in it enough to act upon it. We must all become people of action. "To know" is not sufficient. It is necessary both to know and do.