

Leader's skills and practices

Best practices in leadership

- Choose a leader/manager who you know or knew personally and who you consider a good or even great leader
- This person should not necessarily be a well-known public figure; he or she could be a leader “at a local level”
- Think about what this person does or did to produce results
- Think about this person's **practices** (and behavior that inspired others to follow)

- Work a couple of minutes alone. Then form groups and discuss the practices & behaviors.
- Name some 3-5 practices or behaviors, and choose a volunteer to present the list to us

Leadership Practices, Kouzes and Posner (2017) The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations

Their research was carried out with over 1,000 high performing leaders and with their 'followers' too – establishing what made them successful. They asked in their research:

- What qualities individual leaders believed they needed when they were at their most successful
- What qualities those who were being led believed were important when they felt themselves being well led

Cont'd.. Five practices they found

1. Leaders challenge the process

- Continuously seek challenging opportunities to change, grow, innovate, and improve at a personal and organizational level
- Experiment, take risks, and encourage others to do so.

2. Leaders inspire a shared vision

- Create a vision of an uplifting future where individuals feel energised by the organizational or team vision
- Enlist others in this common vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes and dreams

3. Leaders enable others to act

- Foster collaboration by promoting co-operative goals and building trust between leaders and team members, and between teams
 - Strengthen others by sharing information and power and by increasing their discretion and visibility
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4. Leaders model the way

- Set an example for others by behaving in ways that are consistent with your values and those of your organization
- Plan small wins that promote progress in individuals and teams, then build on these to maintain momentum

5. Leaders “encourage the heart”

- Seek out and recognize individual and team contributions to the success of every project.
- Celebrate team and individual accomplishments regularly – and look for engaging and novel ways to do so.

Another set of best practices...

- **Be consistent in your actions**
 - Predictability brings stability to the workplace
- **Communicate (clearly, accurately and thoroughly) – especially important when you're delegating tasks.**
 - Who is responsible for the task? What they have to do? When they have to do it by?)How should they do it (if needed))?
- **Listen actively and ask questions**
 - Important: take the time to hang around in the office rather than having formal discussions in the office
 - Management by walking around: roam the workplace at random, make unplanned “visits” to engage and learn
- **Lead by example**
 - Ask yourself: What behaviors do you exhibit that others already mirror? Which ones could you start exhibiting that will influence your team and make the workplace better for everyone?

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Delegate and get out of the way

- Ask: why not delegate (if you are in the position to delegate..)

Provide constructive feedback regularly

- Steer clear of critiques and give your staff useful, actionable feedback that they can apply to their role and grow their skills.
- Give people feedback in person

Don't overwhelm your employees – use clear goals and chop the goals in pieces

- Focus on most important areas of concern for the moment, address the most burning issue first, and then move on to the next issue

Spread the positivity

- Moods are contagious...

Critical thinkpoints

- **To what degree are the good/best practices individual manager's practices or organizational practices?**
- **Could these practices be seen as embedded in the organizational culture – leaders/managers reproducing the culture? Or changing or constructing the culture?**