



Everyday Leadership

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The world of work is changing, has already changed, but most businesses are still operating culturally like they are back in the 1950's.

A lot of our beliefs and habit patterns around managing people stem from the 50's when the WWII generation started to build our corporations. They used what they learned in the US Army and applied it to organizational structure, operating instructions and communication systems. This made sense at the time, when you needed to send information up from the factory floor to the managers' level and then sometimes further up to the executive suite. Decisions were made and then sent back to the floor and out to the field to execute business goals and objectives.

Today, with access to technology, entire levels of management are made redundant. In the field or at the client site, you can trouble shoot in the moment and make recommendations for improvements and changes. No need to check with the office to see if parts are available or to get approval. But this requires a different kind of reporting structure and management system. And it requires a different kind of worker.

The speed of change today is faster than the human psyche seems able to handle, and it's increasingly difficult to reconcile the rhythms of our personal lives with the rapidity of a twenty-four-hour news cycle.

- *Marianne Williamson*

That's not all that has changed since the 50's. We've moved from a manufacturing based society to a service work economy. Even if you are still part of manufacturing, the way we produce goods has changed.

The factory has moved from assembly line work, where each worker turns his wrench, to cellular manufacturing—which is more team based work.

Workers are not only responsible for producing the goods; they are part of teams responsible for quality, process improvement and customer satisfaction.

In the work of the industrial age, the drive was to find ways to reduce costs, improve efficiency and increase to standardization, in order to remove human error. In today's entrepreneurial, innovation-based service economy, businesses are looking for ways to add value, be unique and add a human element to the experience. Even companies that sell "things", want their customers to enjoy experiences. And, experiences are provided by people.

Industrial Age
Reduce Costs



Experience Economy
Create Value

In the industrial age, people were trained to do one thing well and to do it over and over again. Today, we need workers to be cross trained to do many jobs. A cross trained workforce is more modular, and the company can be more responsive to changing customer demands. Workers become more valuable to the company, become more fully engaged in their work and look to make improvements in end products and operating processes.

Competency  **Omni-Competency**

It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.

- *Charles Darwin*

And in the industrial age, managers focused on efficiencies looking to reduce time for work completion. Frederick Taylor conducted time and motion studies to identify the most efficient work process. Prior to that, workers were considered skilled craftsman who had completed apprenticeships and had job autonomy and artistry. Taylor's "scientific method" said there was one right way to perform work to provide a more consistent outcome.

Today, we want to provide "wow" experiences every time we connect with the customer. Whether it's on the phone or in person, the customer should feel that their transaction was not average—but extraordinary. While many of your business practices need to be standardized to improve the customer experience, it also requires each customer experience to be tailored (not Taylored). This needs worker autonomy and innovation to humanize and personalize the experience for the customer.

Time and Motion  **Manage Experiences**

In the past, the managers did all the thinking and workers did all the working. Today we need everyone to do both the thinking and the working. Because of work demand, we are already asking managers to get involved doing the work. Now we are asking workers to get involved in the thinking. We call this kind of worker an Everyday Leader, because leadership means stepping up to solve problems, connecting with customers and looking for ways to improve the customer experience. Everyday Leaders look to make a difference.



So what is leadership? Webster's Dictionary defines leadership as "the power or ability to lead other people;" but for most people, there's a lot more to it than that. Ask anyone what it means to be a leader, and you'll likely hear something unique every time.

Character: for many leadership is as much about the kind of person you are, as it is the things you do.

Influence: leaders have the ability to influence people and events. They influence outcomes, rather than standing idly by. They are creators, rather than bystanders.

Action: leaders take action, they are action oriented. They are not frozen like deer in the headlights, but rather take purposeful action that can bring people together, solve problems and create new opportunities.

The starting point of becoming an Everyday Leader is to examine your own personal values. The more clearly you define your personal values, the stronger your confidence, the more likely you will perform effectively when your values are challenged.

Everyone's values are different, and this is what makes each of us unique. But one common value all leaders have is integrity. Some call it doing the right thing, or honesty or transparency.

Define your values, but start with integrity. By defining your values, you have started yourself on the road to leadership. Socrates said, "The unexamined life is not worth living". The more time you spend writing and rewriting your values, the more you become a man or woman of character.

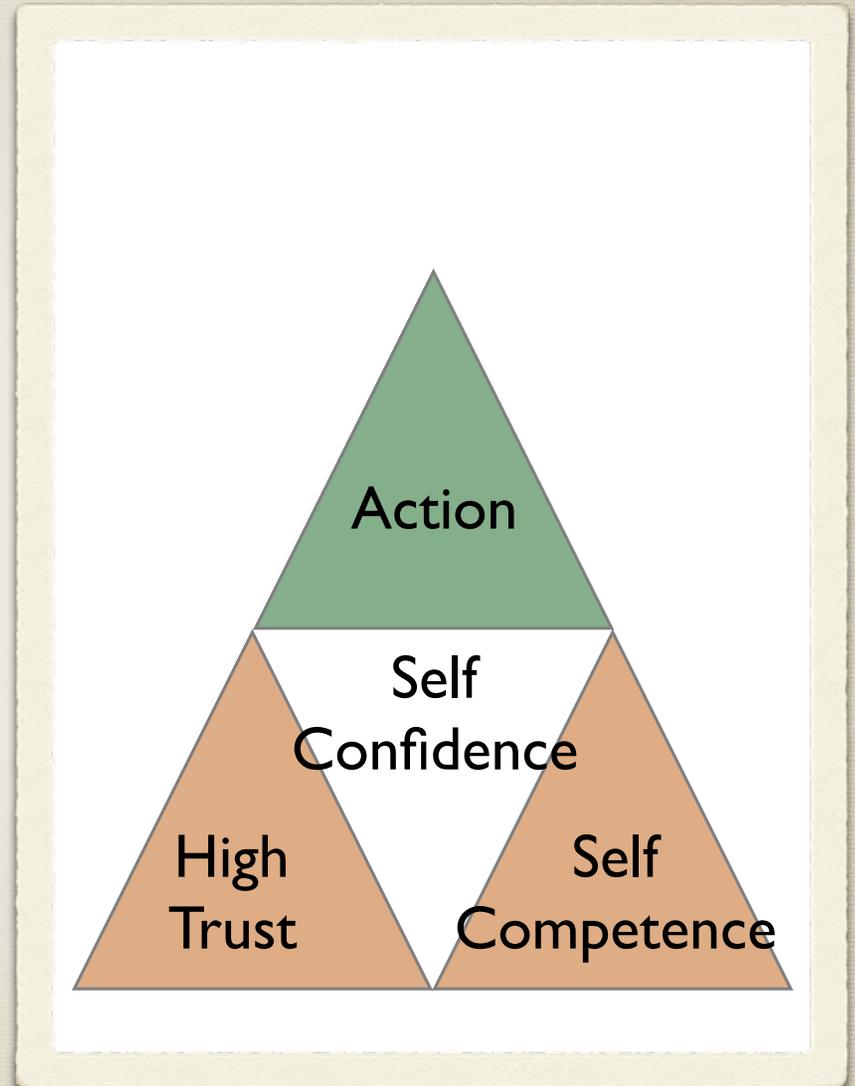
Your values are at the core of becoming an Everyday Leader. Also, at the core of your character is your self confidence. Working on your values is the beginning of building your self confidence.

Another way to work on your self confidence is to define your long term and short term goals. The closer your goals are driven by your values, the more you will feel a sense of satisfaction, achievement and happiness.

Your self confidence is also supported by your self competence—meaning the better you are at a certain skill, the more self confident you are in that skill.

Identify the capabilities that are important to you, and resolve to become good at them. The more competent you become, the more confident you become. Your confidence is often dependent on working within a supportive, high trust environment. As you try new ideas, you need to be surrounded by peers that encourage you to push through the moments of self doubt and fledgling competence.

Anything worth doing is worth doing badly, at first. Most people struggle and then give up. A supportive work environment encourages you to keep on working until you are competent.



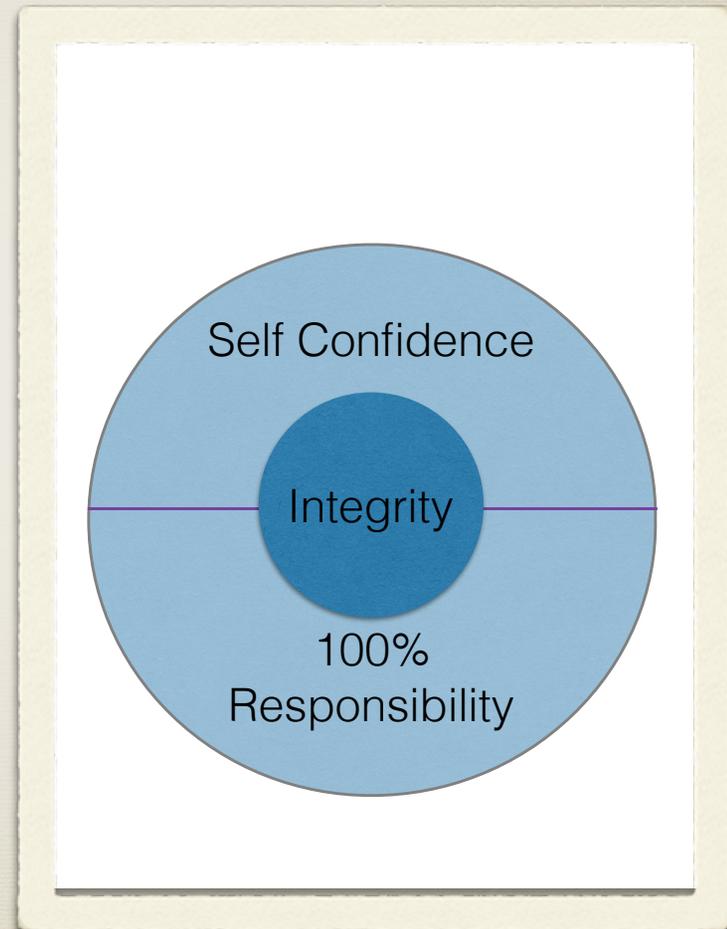
We used to write this down, “move fast and break things.” And the idea was, unless you are breaking some stuff you are not moving fast enough.

- Mark Zuckerberg

Your values are at the core of Everyday Leadership. Your self confidence is at the core of Everyday Leadership. And your self responsibility is at the core of Everyday Leadership. Everyday leaders take both the credit and the blame for everything that happens to them. People who are failures take credit for their successes, but they blame their problems on bad luck, other people or circumstances beyond their control.

Everyday leaders have a strong sense of internal accountability, which extends to their work and to their relationships. Everyday leaders say, “if it’s to be, it’s up to me”. They are not waiting for someone else to come to the rescue. There is no calvary that will ride in and save the day. You are the calvary.

Your attitude towards self responsibility is one of the most important statements you can make about yourself and the kind of leader you are. A highly responsible everyday leader tends to be positive, optimistic, self-confident, self reliant and self-controlled.



Surrounded around the core are the four practices of Everyday Leadership.

The first practice is a results orientation. Everyday leaders can be counted on to get results, to deliver the goods, to get things done. They are both efficient and effective; they produce good results in a timely manner. And because they can get a significant amount of quality work done in the right period of time, they are considered competent. And their competence supports their self confidence.

Identify the capabilities that are important to you, and resolve to get good at them. Every job has a series of tasks or capabilities that you absolutely must be good at to be known as competent. Define what the tasks or **Key Result Areas** are for your job. Then give yourself a rating for each of the KRA's.

Now go to work on your weakest Key Result Area. Most people prefer to work on areas where they are already excellent, because it allows them stay in their comfort zone. Instead, force yourself to work on your weakest Key Result Area. The good news is that you don't have to jump your performance to 10's, which is particularly hard to do in your weakest area. *The Winning Edge* principle says that small differences in ability can lead to enormous differences in results.

The second practice of Everyday Leaders is **Relationships**.

Everyday leaders get along with a great number of people. They reach out and make efforts to connect with people that are not just like them. It's easy to make friends and connections that are similar to you. It takes effort and energy to connect with people that are outside your comfort zone and your circle of influence.

The best way to build relationships with others is to become an effective listener. Always make the effort listen first and make your suggestions second. Allowing people to share their opinion, their comments and concerns puts people at ease and raises their impression of you.

Effective listeners make good eye contact, acknowledge emotions as well as facts, ask questions to gather more information, and then feed back their understanding of the situation.

The first two practices of Everyday Leadership will separate you from most every other worker. To be known as competent at what you do and getting along with a great number of people is tremendously fulfilling. You can't be a leader unless you are known as somebody who gets stuff done. Who would follow someone who is a shoddy worker? Being easy to get along with and having a network of relationships is paramount to your leadership skills.

The third practice of Everyday Leaders is **creativity and innovation**.

Everyday Leaders look for new ways to improve the business. While others see problems, they see opportunities. There is always stuff to complain about. There are always systems, practices and procedures that don't make it easy to work.

There is a never ending list of things that need improvement. Making an effort at improving even the smallest thing is an act of creativity.

Most feel that innovation is reserved for artists, musicians and those “creative” types. Most companies are not actively encouraging workers to come up with new ideas. Most companies will say, “thanks for sharing, now get back to work”.

If we continue to discourage workers from offering ideas; then workers learn that their ideas are not necessary and that they are not expected to do the thinking.

Creativity is like a muscle: use it or lose it. The more you engage in small creative acts, the more you will tap into your creative muscle.

We must change the way we see creativity. Everyone can bring artistry and flair to their work. Everyday leaders take pride and put their signature on their work.

In the modern world of business, it is useless to be a creative original thinker unless you can also sell what you create. Management cannot be expected to recognize a good idea unless it is presented to them by a good salesman.

- David Ogilvy

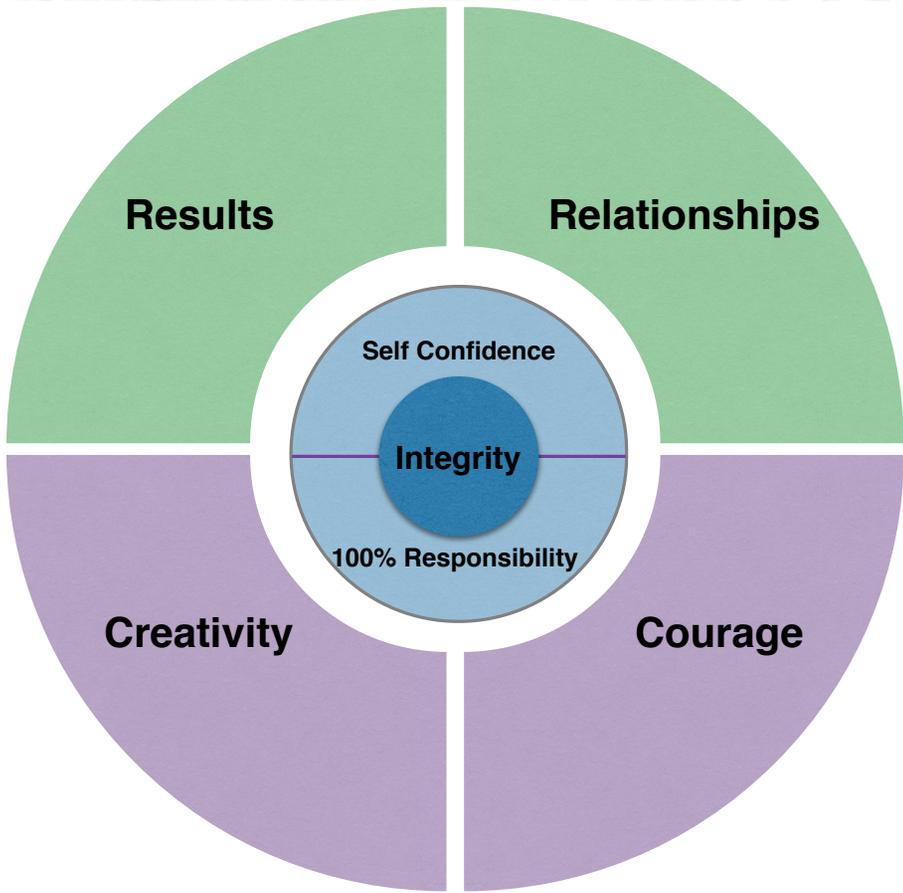
The most important thing about creativity is that you honor your creativity, and you don't ever ignore it or go against what that creative image is telling you.

- Lady Gaga

The fourth practice of Everyday Leadership is **courage**.

This is the quality that we most associate with leadership. The courageous leader rushes into the face of battle and has followers lining up behind him or her. But here is the secret: everyone is afraid. Fear is the natural human response to being confronted with threats to our physical or psychological safety. Our reptilian brain keeps us in our comfort zone where it is safe and controls our fight or flight mechanism. Beware the reptile, and confront your fears.

Everyday Leaders have the ability to face their fears and act without any guarantee of success. Everyday Leaders dare to go forward. Everyone is afraid; everyday leaders have the willingness to act in spite of their fears. It takes courage to back your own ideas. It takes courage to try to shape the company so it better serves its employees and its customers. Courage comes in two parts: the first part is to launch, to try something new. And the second part is to persist, to stick it with it, to stay the course.



Innovation has nothing to do with how many R&D dollars you have. When Apple came up with the Mac, IBM was spending at least 100 times more on R&D. It's not about money. It's about the people you have, how you're led, and how much you get it.
- Steve Jobs

Everyday Leadership starts with you.

Start with the inner core: with your values, your goals, your confidence and your commitment to personal responsibility.

Next work on the four practices: results, relationships, creativity and courage. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of leaders in all walks of life. Use your everyday leadership at work and at home, with your friends and family.

Practice your leadership with opportunities and challenges that are small, and soon you will be called upon to be a leader on things that are great. And you can do it.