

THE 7 GREATEST PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP

*“How to Create
a High Performing
Organization”*



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The 7 Greatest Principles of Leadership

The greatest principles of leadership are similar to the greatest qualities of any human being - respect for others, compassion for the state of their lives, and appreciation for their knowledge and existence.

We can do no better than honor another's soul, humanness and heart.

The **7 Greatest Principles of Leadership** is a story about a family who, although they have individual pursuits, agree as one in their relationships with others.

They may stumble and fall, but each one picks themselves up to fulfill their lives as leaders, with heart and courage.

As it happened...

James was fishing with his son Tommy. It was a rare day for both of them, each involved with their own lives. James was the CEO of a successful trucking company with hundreds of employees. He was always busy taking care of his business so his family was well cared for. Tommy was fifteen years old, on his own path to becoming a great soccer player. Thomas never wanted to be in the family business, however he did love his Dad. Instead they talked soccer and trucks.

Actually, they spoke about people. Neither knew how important people were to the trucking company and the soccer team, as great as these pursuits were. Fishing together helped both of them maintain clarity and focus.

James asked Tommy if he wanted to be a soccer player on a super team when he graduated high school. Tommy agreed that this was his path. "No slight, Dad, I just don't like business. Who wants to deal with all those people?"

Dad asked Tommy about the people on his soccer team. Weren't there a lot of people to deal with there?

Tommy agreed that there were, but he also said they were a great team, with a great coach, and there were no real problems if they all worked together.

Dad said that was exactly like his trucking business. If all his employees, executives and managers worked together, they would have a great business.

Sometimes, though, James said, there was conflict. They didn't always agree. Disagreements led to late trucks, unhappy customers and lowered profits.

Tommy said something similar would happen once in a while with the team.

If a team member were upset, there would be problems in the unity of the team. If the team did not work as one, no goals were scored.

Hmm. Maybe they could put their heads together and figure out how to make the soccer team, coach and parents work well together. Dad could use this information to figure out how to get all his people working together. The better off the business was, the more time James could spend with Tommy. The better off the soccer team was, the better teams would be scouting Tommy in a couple of years.

Tommy asked his Dad what he thought the biggest problem was. Dad offered a recent dilemma. One of his executives wanted to speak with him about a problem his sales team was having. He really needed to speak with James. James was backed up and booked for days on end and could not find the time. The executive knew that his own issue was vital to the company. He needed a solution.

James determined that making it easier for his executives to speak with him was a priority. James sat down with his team of twelve highly valued people and discovered these managers and executives had similar problems.

As difficult as it was for James to meet with his executives, it was just as difficult for his executives to meet with their team members.

There had to be a better solution.

An open door policy would be too chaotic. What did work was for James and his High Value Team to create time in their schedule two times per week, for at least thirty minutes, where they would be available to any other executive to speak with them. If they scheduled these thirty-minute sessions throughout the week, the energy in the business would be elevated.

This became rule number one.

Rule Number One: Make it easy for people to speak with you

Dad and Tommy continued fishing and talking.

Tommy wanted to know what would be discussed at these meetings. Dad answered that it would vary; discussions could be about drivers, sales, production, trucks, or marketing. James said the most important thing about these meetings was to listen to what people had to say, come up with a plan, then stick to it. Which made clear communication most important. Tommy wanted to know what clear communication meant and how Dad could make this happen.

Dad told Tommy that his company had written vision and mission statements along with a list of values the organization encompassed. Based on these guidelines, there should be few errors. Tommy said "Whoa, Dad, what is all that stuff you are talking about? Vision, mission, values? Sounds complicated and I don't even know what it means!"

James told Tommy that a business vision is what pulls you forward, and states the company's impact in the world. A mission statement is about what services the company provides and the values that help everyone at the company stay motivated and inspired.

With all this in place, it was important that whatever was decided in these new meetings was adhered to. It was important that everyone keep his or her word.

"Wow", said Tommy, "sounds like another rule for you Dad!"

James agreed and rule number two was born:

Rule Number Two: Keep your word

Tommy said to his Dad that he now understood what clear communication really meant. "But Dad, isn't there another word you could use instead of clear communication for everyone?"

James said, "Yes, there is. It is called transparency."

"Transparency is about telling the full truth in a timely manner, being responsive to others' ideas and disclosing information to everyone."

"So, with your help Tommy, we have rule number three:

Rule Number Three: Create transparency

"Glad to be of help Dad!"

"Thanks Tommy, but I think something else needs to go along with this rule and that's trust." "What do you mean Dad, isn't being clear and transparent enough?" "Not really", said James, "because if I don't trust them and they don't trust me, rules do not matter. I have to know that they have my back as I would have their back. It's a matter of honor: they have confidence and faith in me to see that their desires are fulfilled, and I have faith and confidence that when I ask them to comply, they will. I have experience in the trucking business, as well as the people business. I have kept myself up on the latest trends and have attended several personal and leadership development trainings to know that if I were not functioning in the wisest way possible, no one would care what I had to say and the business, along with my people, would fail."

"Well Dad, it seems you have two rules that just popped up: mutual trust and wisdom."

Rule Number Four: Mutual Trust

Rule Number Five: Practice Compassionate Wisdom

"By practicing mutual trust, I let everyone know that they always have the opportunity to ask me if they can help me, not just the other way around. When someone is free to communicate directly with his or her boss or boss of the boss, the sense of isolation is eliminated.

When drawing upon my wisdom, I am able to access my experiences, knowledge and intuition to discern what is right and what is wrong. My people and vendors rely on me for this expertise. I will continue to apply compassionate wisdom because it benefits everyone, including myself. My wisdom also must provide for the long-term stability of the business. Whether I retire, sell the business or expand it, I want to create a continuity-training program for executives who may be able to take my place."

"Well Dad, I think we should take these fish home, make dinner and discuss these rules with Mom and Emma. Make sure you email these rules to yourself so you don't forget them."

Rule Number One: Make it easy for people to speak with you

Rule Number Two: Keep your word

Rule Number Three: Create transparency

Rule Number Four: Encompass mutual trust

Rule Number Five: Put wisdom into practice

After dinner...

"Mom, what do you think about Dad's rules?" asked Tommy. "I think they are great", said Tommy's Mom. "I am already thinking about how I can incorporate some of them into my direct sales business. My team is successful, however, I think that if we discuss these principles and use them in our business, at least as a test, they would be a great help. I do have some questions though, so let's discuss."

"Wait for me", said Emma. "I think I can use some of these strategies too, especially with this new online business I am starting. But some things are missing Dad."

"What's missing Emma?" said Dad.

"What I don't hear you talking about are people and money. I know you discussed executives and managers, but not everyone can be one of them. What about your employees? How do you get the best people who want to work with and for you? Another thing missing is money! I mean really Dad, no money talk?"

"You are right Emma. The money has been flowing so well and I have so few complaints about the employees that I did not even think that these two issues could be rules for me to pay attention to. It's possible with the excessive need for meetings among the executives and managers that employee issues are near the top of the list. It's important that I hire the right person for the right job. If a person brings the right skills and foundation, it makes it much easier for them to align with the position. I also want to be able to promote from within, so specific training programs are also necessary."

Rule Number Six: Hire the right people and keep them happy

"We need money to purchase more inventory, create the training programs I spoke about, provide raises and bonuses for everyone and grow the business."

Rule Number Seven: Expand the bottom line.

Rule Number One: Make it easy for people to speak with you

Rule Number Two: Keep your word

Rule Number Three: Create transparency

Rule Number Four: Encompass mutual trust

Rule Number Five: Put wisdom into practice

Rule Number Six: Hire the right people and keep them happy

Rule Number Seven: Expand the bottom line

The family was next met with the question of what to call these rules. The word 'rules' seemed a little strong.

"What about beliefs?" said Emma? "You do think that these rules or whatchamacallits are beliefs, don't you?"

Dad concurred. "However my thinking was more along the line of principles. Franklin D. Roosevelt said that: *Rules are not necessarily sacred, principles are.* "I want these rules or beliefs to be a bit more respected in my business, even in your team Tommy or your business Mom and yours as well Emma."

"How about the word 'principles?'" Dad continued. "The word has some weight to it, values are implied and I think everyone can accept the word as a guide as opposed to a threat. It doesn't seem like a 'harsh' word. What do you guys think?"

Everyone at the dinner table was excited. "Well we have it", said Dad. "*The 7 Greatest Principles of Leadership* is a great title to this amazing list that everyone can apply to their business or their life. Congratulations to each and every one of us for this great collaboration! I can hardly wait to talk to people about them."

Here they are again:

7 Greatest Principles of Leadership

Principle Number One: Make it easy for people to speak with you

Principle Number Two: Keep your word

Principle Number Three: Create transparency

Principle Number Four: Encompass mutual trust

Principle Number Five: Put wisdom into practice

Principle Number Six: Hire the right people and keep them happy

Principle Number Seven: Expand the bottom line

James and his family have respect and compassion for each other, as well as appreciation for each other's knowledge and experience. These qualities can transfer into business easily and effortlessly to create outstanding leaders.