

THE INFLUENTIAL LEADER

Checklist



A great leader is someone who takes responsibility

- This means taking the flack when things don't go to plan
 - This in turn protects your staff
 - This means that they can now do their best work and feel safe to take creative risks
 - This creates a better work environment and a better quality of life

- It means being willing to make decisions
 - Many leaders put off decisions because it means committing to something, they will be held accountable for
 - The result is that the whole business flounders, and nothing gets done
 - Making quick decisions means being okay with potentially being wrong
 - This will earn you the respect of your team *and* your superiors

- Taking responsibility means owning up when things go wrong
 - But this also means that you can take credit when things go very well

- Looking after staff also means looking after their physical needs
 - Are they comfortable in the office?
 - Are they healthy?
 - Are they happy with their colleagues?
 - The more you ensure these things, the more you can help them to do their best work

Great leaders should have emotional intelligence

- Emotional intelligence means understanding the mood and motivations of others
 - This means that you also know how what you say to someone will affect their mood and motivate them or not

- You will be faced with difficult conversations – such as criticizing work that someone has done for you
 - The way you communicate your feelings and instruct the corrections can *hugely* influence the productivity of that member of staff going forward
 - This comes down to every last word choice – so be very careful

Great leaders must be able to motivate staff

- Your job is NOT to micromanage and to tell your team precisely what steps to take when working on a project
 - This can remove any creative freedom from a job and make it unrewarding for the professional
 - It wastes time with back and forth
 - It wastes the talent of the individual hired for their specific skills in that area

- You should not try to punish or reward your team for their efforts
 - Punishments create the wrong atmosphere. This can create stress and even cause fighting among your team as a result.
 - Even rewards will make your team too focused on just the end goal
 - Studies show that this can actually dampen creativity and problem-solving skills
 - That said, for completely menial work, using incentives *can* be effective

- Instead, you should give freedom and control to your team
 - By doing this, you will be giving them the ownership over certain projects
 - This lets them approach it in the way that they want to, and means they can feel proud when things go well
 - It is not *intrinsically* motivating, meaning that they feel motivated to work on the project even when it doesn't excite them otherwise

Great leaders should have excellent communication skills

- Your job is to convey instructions and to let your team know what is expected of them
 - Delivering this in a concise way will avoid errors and prevent wasted time
 - You need to make sure you list the key points in a clear and straightforward manner

- Explain to your team the reasons *why* you are asking them to do things
 - This helps them to feel more respected and valued
 - At the same time, it gives them the flexibility to get real work done

- A great leader should be able to command respect through charisma and tone
 - Speak more slowly
 - Learn to use long pauses
 - Speak with your body

Great leaders are great managers

- A manager is someone who can manage people and resources in order to meet targets and get work done

- This is means knowing where to assign each task

- It also means breaking your goals down into smaller targets that you can work toward

- Process fixing can help you to work more efficiently

- Do not “play” at manager
 - That means you shouldn’t carry out tasks and projects that are purely intended to make you feel more important.
 - Many meetings are in fact a complete waste of time