

Leadership Lessons Learned On the Job
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Personal

1. All true leadership involves constantly replenishing and spending political capital – the power to persuade – and only infrequently playing the trump card of authority.
2. Leaders are not in the first instance individual contributors to the primary missions but are enablers of others.
3. Tell the truth. In particular, differentiate consulting from informing.
4. Say “Thank you” and “I’m sorry” as often as is appropriate.
5. Leadership roles involve contact with interesting people and contexts, but these must be byproducts not ego-satisfying ends in themselves.

Team

6. Share values and trust in a team, or change the players. People leave their leaders not their organizations. They are hired for qualifications, but fired for personality.
7. Strive for solidarity with no defining and defending of turf within the leadership team. When one speaks let all be bound to the position taken.
8. By the time you identify drag on a team's progress, it is always larger than you know so address it.
9. Maintaining a high performance team requires constant vigilance.
10. Recruiting excellent people leverages your work and makes it last. Hire only excellent people.
11. Be explicit with direct reports that you expect a lot, and in return commit to providing what they need to be personally successful, whatever that may be.
12. Progress requires change; change requires decisions. One person can only make a small number of decisions, so delegate and hold decision makers accountable. Delegate rather than routinely approving.
13. Make the best decisions possible with the information and experience you have. Don't focus on past mistakes because this leads to a downward spiral. Focus on future opportunities because this leads to an upward spiral.

Tools

14. Tools allow both amateurs and craftsmen to do better work. So with the tools of management.
15. Organizational structure is a tool. People get things done; structure can get in the way. Structure is necessary but not sufficient.
16. Process is a tool. Formal processes should encapsulate best practice or agreed practice. Results matter. Process is necessary but not sufficient.
17. Craftsmen are not bound by their tools; so good leaders are not bound by process or structure but step aside from it only very selectively.

Partnerships

18. Inter-organizational relationships build on personal relationships of trust. Start at the working level and then leverage up.
19. Partnerships work when partners are committed to each other's success rather than lobbying for their individual interests.

Succession

20. Leadership is in relatively short supply but we can teach and mentor, so have more.

We *must* develop the human capacity of our organizations.
21. Create circumstances in which the one who follows you will have success beyond your own.
22. There's no limit to what can be accomplished if you don't care who gets the credit.