

"The most dangerous leadership myth is that leaders are born -- that there is a genetic factor to leadership. This myth asserts that people simply either have certain charismatic qualities or not. That's nonsense; in fact, the opposite is true. Leaders are made rather than born." - Warren G. Bennis

I think along with society, environmental factors, and the heavy influence of family, a leader is made. A leader must possess many traits but the five most powerful tools for a leader are honesty, forward-Looking mindset, competency, inspiration, and intelligence. It is imperative to show evidence of these traits. Simply possessing each trait is not enough; you have to display it in a way that people notice. People want to see you characterize these traits. It isn't sufficient to just be impartial. Avoiding displays of ineptitude won't arouse the same buoyancy as truly displaying competence.

One of the most inspirational people that came to mind is Pastor Joel Osteen. He is a man in a true leadership position. Joel Osteen is the senior pastor of Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas, North America's largest and fastest growing church averaging more than 42,000 attendees at weekly services. Joel Osteen is also the author of the #1 New York Times bestseller, *Your Best Life Now*, and his television ministry is the most watched inspirational program in America. Although I became a viewer by chance, I have become a better person because of him. I recently attended one of his sermons in person and I can honestly say I am not the same person that walked in that day. Joel Osteen possesses all five of the most powerful traits a leader can have, honesty, forward-Looking mindset, competency, inspiration, and intelligence. "Certainly, none of us enjoy going through struggles, but you have to understand that your struggle may be an opportunity for advancement and promotion. The very thing you are fighting against so tenaciously may be the springboard that catapults you to a new level of excellence. Your challenges may become your greatest assets." — Joel Osteen. With his charismatic and contagious qualities, Joel can transpire each of his qualities into each and every one of us. I believe his words are so powerful because I believe he feels and lives by what he preaches. He is intensely passionate and holds such honesty in every word he delivers.

The word leader is defined as a person who rules, guides, or inspires others. Although that may be true, I think there is still so much more to it. One article states, "Good leaders develop through a never ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience." I think a great leader must work hard to grow to keep being a good leader. A superior leader has the qualities and attributes to help mold new leaders. Pastor Joel Osteen is superior example whom continues to grow and strengthen his qualities through giving and reaching to people all over the world. Leaders are role models, mentors, and certainly never forgotten because they imprint their qualities in us.

"Leaders aren't born they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work. And that's the price we'll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal." -Vince Lombardi

Rodriguez (2001), in an article entitled *Futuristic Leadership in a Global Community*, wrote "...candidates aspiring for leadership roles should measure themselves by the vision of the future." Furthermore, in an article entitled *What's Trust Got to Do With It?*, Rodriguez, states "...empowerment as a philosophy and set of behavioral practices means allowing individuals to be in charge of their own career destinies, while meeting and exceeding the institutional and personal goals through a shared vision."

I think both quotes coincide and there is a definite blend of thoughts and harmonization. Both speak of a vision. Whether a vision is shared or belongs to one individual, the aspiration towards a greater purpose is present. One can choose to work alone to accomplish his or her vision or they can choose to come together with others who may share the same vision.

My colleague's impeccable presentation of chapters five and six discussed the importance of how a leader can achieve success towards a vision. In the first video *The First Degree*, one of the main points was that the extra degree makes a difference. At 211 degrees water is hot and at 212 degrees water boils and creates steam. When applied to life, as my classmate Chelsea wisely stated "we can choose to live a mediocre life, or we can choose to push ourselves to be excellent and make a difference". In other words, to get what we want, we must do. That one degree of effort can make the difference between being ordinary or extraordinary.

In the second video where flying geese were used as an example, passion, pride and performance were the 3 P's to success. "It is a fact that in the right formation, the lifting power of many wings can achieve twice the distance of any bird flying alone". The video was about working together in groups. It demonstrated that to be encouraging and accept help from others are both essential keys. Getting people involved in a shared vision can be a strong foundation to reach a goal. Each person must know their purpose and be willing to exceed and push forward not only as an individual but as a whole working towards a vision. "My hunger for success is fueled by my passion". Passion is what is instilled in each soul and is fueled by the fruits of our labor and along with pride it becomes an individual's inner strength. The result is our performance. "Work and self-worth are the two factors in pride that interact with each other and that tend to increase the strong sense of pride found in superior work teams. When people do something of obvious worth, they feel a strong sense of personal worth."- Dennis Kinlaw

Level 5 on *Influence: How does it work* states "Followers are loyal; you spent time mentoring and molding leaders; Great joy comes from watching others grow and develop; you transcend the organization". Once a person is ready to work towards their vision in life, they take what they have been taught in life. They learn from their mistakes and their mentors mistakes as well, and grow. As I continue working towards promoting my own personal professional development, I believe I am seizing the initiative and exercising oversight. For example, I took a big step by starting my education at NMSU. I graduated from high school in 2004, and although it took me a few years to take that initiative, I am now prepared to aggressively proceed towards my career goals. The safeguards that allow me to work towards my goals are living within my financial means and developing networking skills. Once I reach my goal of becoming a registered nurse with a bachelor's in science, my safeguard will be the academic competence skills I am currently acquiring.

My classmate Aaron confidently stated, "Always strive to do better". He further quoted "Never test the depth of the water with both feet....Taking risks is good, but have something to fall back on". Those words of wisdom can make the difference from defeat or prevailing.

The presenters of chapter 7 & 8 showed two very inspirational videos. The first video, *The Last Lecture*, 47 year old, Professor Randy Pausch was diagnosed with brain cancer and only 3-6 months to live. Mr. Pausch's advice to his students was, "Tell the truth, all the time". He further stated, "I don't know how to not have fun, I'm dying and having fun". His message was to achieve our goals but enjoy life while doing it. Sometimes we get so focused or caught up in planning our future that we forget about what is actually passing us by, is our life.

In the second video taken from the movie *Meet the Robinsons*, the two children discuss how to solve a problem. The friend's advice is to keep moving forward. No matter the obstacle, keep moving forward. We must learn from our mistakes, not see them as a negative but turn them around, learn, and grow from them.

"We ought not to look back, unless it is to derive useful lessons from past errors, and for the purpose of profiting by dear bought experience. To inveigh against things that are past and irremediable, is displeasing; but to steer clear of the shelves and rocks we have struck upon, is the part of wisdom, equally as incumbent on political as other men, who have their own little bark, or that of others, to navigate through the intricate paths of life, or the trackless ocean, to the haven of security and rest." ---GEORGE WASHINGTON, letter to Major-General Armstrong, Mar. 26, 1781
