

Leaders are made all around the world. A leader is someone who has learned from life and now has a vision that he or she is committed to and has a desire to be focused on that vision. From my personal perspective I believe that a leader constructs himself or herself. A leader should and must have solid leadership traits to be a good leader. He or she must be focused on what they want to do. They should be committed to their vision. They should also be strongly determined about their vision. If a leader is missing any of these traits then he or she is in reality not a good leader. This is for obvious reasons; hence if you are not focused then you are not determined about any sort of commitment. Everyone has a vision and therefore anyone can be made into a leader. But in order to be a good leader you must have a vision, dedication, and more importantly a desire to lead.

A leader should treat her or his people well. Like Dr. Rodriguez has mentioned in class, a leader must NEVER make someone do anything that she or he would not do. A superior leader is constantly working to improve their leadership skills. There is no way that a person in charge can rest on their success. This leader is at all times the first to lead; hesitating is not an option when bringing a good idea to the table. If you hesitate your opportunity will be lost and there might not be another chance to take your vision into a reality.

A great example of a good leader is Bill Gates. He had, and still has, a vision of his own. He is trusted, committed, focused, and determined to his vision. By building Microsoft he has empowered the world. By making his vision better he is forward-looking; by carrying on with his vision he is competent. Bill Gates is intelligent and inspiring. Bill Gates built himself into a great leader. He saw the window of opportunity open and took advantage of it by not hesitating to bring his vision to the world.

Therefore, I think that a leader is made. One of the most important leadership traits Dr. Rodriguez has taught me is that people must empower one another. If you cannot empower someone then you cannot move ahead. A person who is always negative and never wants to help anyone will not be trusted and trust is something that every person must have to move forward. Honesty is another major aspect of being a good leader. Without honesty, you will lose trust, and without trust you will lose the empowerment that others hand to you. Without these traits, your vision and your leadership will not measure up to strong and positive action that influences others. Leaders are developed, not born.

A good leader must listen to what others have to say and be open to their thoughts. A leader does not just flat out manage. Dr. Rodriguez states in *Redesigning Leadership* that too many people still believe the job of management is to control and direct. However, it is far more meaningful to have the tendency to lead, inspire, coach, support, and empower others than to order them. When a person wants to become a leader they must be prepared for change. In today's chaotic, fast-moving, technology-intensive environment, people-oriented, action-describing, leadership is needed. Leaders have visions and a vision "is not seeing things as they are, but as they will be." A person who wants to become an inspiring leader should prepare for the future, should be open to new ways of doing something, have futuristic thinking in a collaborative setting, and be prepared to meet international challenges. This is what I make from the thought that Dr. Rodriguez has; which reads "candidates aspiring for leadership roles should measure themselves by the vision of the future."

Rodriguez (2001) wrote, "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." What I make of Rodriguez's thought is that when individuals are empowered they choose to follow a vision that they believe in or that they create themselves. They are in charge of building their own future. Empowerment is the one of the most powerful things that a person can do to another individual. Rodriguez (2001) believes that leadership is viewed as power with people, not over people." Furthermore, empowerment as a concept is the vesting of time for shared decision-making.

Leaders need to accept challenges. One should not just accept an institution's standard challenge, but exceed them by taking that extra step. A leader must surpass their own personal goals by also taking that extra time to achieve more than they envisioned themselves doing. They must not dwell upon the past, or dwell upon the present either, for that will be gone soon.

Before reading the three articles that Dr. Rodriguez wrote I believed that a leader should manage others, as stated above. They should control in order to achieve the goals. But this is indeed wrong! A leader must empower others. They must listen to their needs, goals, and ideas. When you combine other visions with yours you are taking that extra step, which may later become a powerful result. Leadership is founded on the fact of moral relationships; it is intended to elevate people to new levels of morality. "Real leadership is being the person others will gladly and confidently follow."