

Leadership Project



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Introduction

What is leadership?

Leadership is hard to define and means different things to different people.

Leadership is crucial for any organisation or group. In general, leadership is the ability to motivate and inspire others to achieve a goal. There are many different types of leaders, such as political leaders, business leaders and sporting leaders. Although there are many different types of leaders, they all share similar traits.

The Five Leadership Traits:

1. Have conviction

Leaders passionately believe in what they are doing. This deep personal conviction and the ability to communicate it to others gives leaders their authority, attracts energy and lessens uncertainty. A clear view of what you wish to achieve helps to guide your decisions, inspires people to follow you, gives you confidence and builds confidence in your followers. In the movie “Moneyball” Billy Beane has conviction in the idea of using statistics to recruit new players. Everyone else on the board said that he shouldn’t get rid of the “best players” but he didn’t listen to them and kept on using the new method.

2. Make risks and take risks

Leaders must make and take risks. Leaders need to understand the opportunities that are there, or can be created, and then capitalise on them. This allows them to take advantage of opportunities for success, create better ways of doing things and better themselves through exposing themselves to new situations. In “Moneyball” Billy Beane shows that he can make and take risks when he risks his job and reputation for his idea of a new method of player scouting.

3. Generate critical mass

Leaders need to generate critical mass because inspiring small scale action is not enough to create big changes. We can see Al Pacino as Tony D’Amato in “Any Given Sunday” relate to the players on his team when he starts to talk to them about his own life and personal experiences. They relate to him through this speech and

begin to really listen to what he is saying and start cheering. He has convinced them and inspired the entire team.

4. Challenge and change

Leaders continue to work towards the next goal and the next and the next. They challenge and change the status quo by getting people's attention and catching their competitors by surprise. Billy Beane using Peter Brand's method of using statistics to find good baseball players caught the other teams and fans by surprise. Billy Beane was proven right as every team uses statistics in sports today.

5. Impose context

Leaders need to stop their followers thinking about stuff that they regard as irrelevant and need to get their followers to focus on important things. This means that the leader must have a clear sign of where he'd like to go, outline key goals and differentiate between what is important and what is not. In Al Pacino's "Inches" speech he outlines exactly what is important for the players. This gives them a very clear goal.



Nelson Mandela

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born on the 18th of July 1918. Nelson Mandela was a South African leader who spent years in prison for taking a stand against apartheid, a policy of racial segregation which gave whites power over blacks.

Mandela was born in Transkei, a small village in south east South Africa. His father was a member of the royal family of the Thembu tribe and chief of the village. Mandela grew up with tribal elders and chief, which gave him an important sense of African heritage. He got the name "Nelson" when he was in primary school. All the teachers gave their pupils Christian names. Mandela studied at the University College of Fort Hare for a Bachelor of Arts but didn't complete his studies as he was expelled for taking part in a student protest. He studied law at the University of Witwatersrand, where he became involved in the movement against racial discrimination and forged key relationships with black and white activists. He finally completed his BA through the University of South Africa and went back to Fort Hare for his graduation in 1943.

In 1944 Mandela joined the African National Congress (ANC), a South African political party. The ANC's main aim was to achieve equal rights for black people in South Africa. Mandela quickly became high in rank. He was one of the youngest and most radical members.

Mandela was jailed for 27 years for planning to overthrow the government. He spent 27 years in prison, 18 on Robben Island. Mandela showed great **conviction**. He suffered quietly and his followers looked at him as a martyr. The Afrikaans thought that once Mandela was released he would plan on seeking revenge, but Mandela proved them wrong. This showed how committed he was to his cause.

On February 11 1990, Mandela walked free from prison. Mandela knew that a compromise between the whites and the blacks was the only thing that would stop civil war. In 1994, thanks to Mandela, the first free elections which were open to all South African citizens were held. Mandela's party, the ANC, won over sixty-two percent of the popular vote and Mandela was elected president. This showed the huge support that Mandela had and his ability to **generate critical mass**.

As a president, Mandela was able to **make and take risks**. He overturned a vote to change the Springbok rugby team's logo, name and colours. The black people viewed the Springboks as a symbol on prejudice and apartheid. Mandela knew that if he got rid of the Springboks he would lose a large following of his Afrikaans followers. Mandela took a risk by wearing a Springbok cap and announcing that he would keep the Springboks at a rally in front of his black followers. He took a risk but he knew that it was the right thing to do.

Mandela striving towards the goal of uniting people in South Africa in a peaceful way after being imprisoned for 27 years **challenged** the expectations of his followers as well as his opponents. He did not react to his imprisonment and release as a victim looking for revenge. He was imaginative and visionary because he worked to unite old enemies. Mandela was also a magnificent public speaker. Mandela was able use his speeches to grab people's attention, energise his followers and **impose context**.



Daniel O'Connell

Daniel O'Connell was an Irish political leader in the 19th century. O'Connell was born near Cahirciveen in Co. Kerry in 1775. When he was alive Catholics were second-class citizens in Ireland. O'Connell firmly believed that Catholics should be treated equally to Protestants.

O'Connell successfully **generated critical mass**. O'Connell raised funds for the Catholic Association, which he set up to achieve Catholic Emancipation, by getting people to join by paying a penny a month. This monthly fee was low enough for poor people, this meant O'Connell was able to achieve more support. This ultimately resulted in the Catholic Relief Bill of 1829 which allowed Catholics to sit in Parliament and hold all public offices in Ireland.

O'Connell firmly believed that he wouldn't use violence to achieve his goals and he had great **conviction** in this belief. After he killed a man in a duel, he swore never to kill again. An example of just how strong this belief really was, was in 1843 when O'Connell called off a "Monster Meeting" that Dublin Castle banned, which was about repeal of the Act of Union, because he knew that there would be bloodshed. After calling off the meeting, repeal of the Union never happened in his lifetime.

O'Connell was a notably gifted orator and spoke at his "Monster Meetings." Some of these meetings would reach a crowd of hundreds of thousands of supporters. At these meetings O'Connell was able to **impose context**, including making it clear to his followers that violence was out of the question.

O'Connell did not rest on his achievements and was able to **challenge and change**. Once he achieved Catholic Emancipation he tried to achieve repeal of the act of union, which meant Ireland did not have home rule. O'Connell also **made and took risks**. All of his campaigning meant that he was sentenced to prison for a year.



Daniel O'Connell as a young man

Conclusion

Both Nelson Mandela and Daniel O'Connell were highly effective leaders. They were also quite similar. They were striving for a similar goal, equality. Both leaders showed great examples of the five traits of leadership, they were both willing to go to prison for their beliefs, they both generated great support, they both very much challenged what was considered normal and they both were gifted orators. This showed me just how important these qualities are.

It is difficult for me to decide which leader I think is better. On the one hand, O'Connell was not prepared to use violence to achieve his goals and Mandela was. It is clear O'Connell did what was morally right. His stance against the use of violence meant that he could not achieve everything he planned to do, most notably the repeal of the Act of Union. O'Connell's moral position was that "the end does not justify the means" and that violence could not be justified.

I learned a lot from the leadership module and my project. I think that Leadership will probably be my favourite module of the year, as I can use what I've learned in my life and I think it will benefit me.