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Quotes about Leaders and Leadership

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The chief executive who knows his strengths and weaknesses as a leader is likely to be far more effective than the one who remains blind to them. He also is on the road to humility -- that priceless attitude of openness to life that can help a manager absorb mistakes, failures, or personal shortcomings.

- Adair, John

A leader knows what's best to do; a manager knows merely how best to do it.

- Adelman, Ken

Every ruler is harsh whose laws is new.

- Aeschylus

Skill in the art of communication is crucial to a leader's success. He can accomplish nothing unless he can communicate effectively.

- Allen, Norman

The minute a person whose word means a great deal to others dare to take the open-hearted and courageous way, many others follow.

- Anderson, Marian

Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. You plan a tower that will pierce the clouds?

Lay first the foundation of humility.

- Augustine, St.

If you have fear of those that command you, spare those that obey you.

- Azai, Rabbi Ben

A leader is a person you will follow to a place you wouldn't go by yourself.

- Barker, Joel A.

The first task of a leader is to keep hope alive.

- Batten, Joe

The manager administers; the leader innovates. The manager has a short-range view; the leader has a long-range perspective. The manager asks how and when; the leader asks what and why. The manager has his eye on the bottom line; the leader has his eye on the horizon. The manager accepts the status quo; the leader challenges it.

- Bennis, Warren

Becoming a leader is synonymous with becoming yourself. It is precisely that simple, and it is also that difficult.

- Bennis, Warren

Leadership is the wise use of power. Power is the capacity to translate intention into reality and sustain it.

- Bennis, Warren

Managers are people who do things right; leaders are people who do the right thing.

- Bennis, Warren

If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

- Bible

Leadership is getting players to believe in you. If you tell a teammate you're ready to play as tough as you're able to, you'd better go out there and do it. Players will see right through a phony. And they can tell when you're not giving it all you've got. Leadership is diving for a loose ball, getting the crowd involved, getting other players involved. It's being able to take it as well as dish it out. That's the only way you're going to get respect from the players.

- Bird, Larry

A leader is a dealer in hope.

- Bonaparte, Napoleon

When firmness is sufficient, rashness is unnecessary.

- Bonaparte, Napoleon

Men are lead by trifles.

- Bonaparte, Napoleon

Every private in the French army carries a Field Marshall wand in his knapsack.

- Bonaparte, Napoleon

An order that can be misunderstood will be misunderstood.

- Bonaparte, Napoleon

Six traits of effective leaders: 1. Make others feel important 2. Promote a vision 3. Follow the golden rule 4. Admit mistakes 5. Criticize others only in private 6. Stay close to the action Example has more followers than reason. We unconsciously imitate what pleases us, and approximate to the characters we most admire.

- Bovee, Christian Nevell

There are many elements to a campaign. Leadership is number one. Everything else is number two.

- Brecht, Bertolt

When we think we lead we are most led.

- Byron, Lord

The successful man doesn't use others, other people use the successful man, for above all the success is of service.

- Caine, Mark

Tell a person they are brave and you help them become so.

- Carlyle, Thomas

'Tis a dainty thing to command, though 'twere but a flock of sheep.

- Cervantes, Miguel De

The nation will find it very hard to look up to the leaders who are keeping their ears to the ground.

- Churchill, Winston

I was not the lion, but it fell to me to give the lion's roar.

- Churchill, Winston

If you lead the people with correctness, who will dare not be correct?

- Confucius

A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd.

- Crook, James

Leaders don't inflict pain -- they share pain.

- Depree, Max

Justice is the first virtue of those who command, and stops the complaints of those who obey.

- Diderot, Denis

Wise leaders generally have wise counselors because it takes a wise person themselves to distinguish them.

- Diogenes of Sinope

No affection and a great brain, these are the people to command the world.

- Disraeli, Benjamin

I must follow the people. Am I not their leader?

- Disraeli, Benjamin

The man who follows a crowd will never be followed by a crowd.

- Donnell, R. S.

Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.

- Drucker, Peter F.

Leadership is not magnetic personality--that can just as well be a glib tongue. It is not making friends and influencing people --that is flattery. Leadership is lifting a person's vision to higher sights, the raising of a person's performance to a higher standard, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations.

- Drucker, Peter F.

Each person must decide for himself what he wants each day. As a leader, I will expose you to the options and the likely consequences of those options. I'll even share my opinion if asked, but I'll never confuse it with the opinion, which simply doesn't exist.

- Dyer, Wayne

Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.

- Eisenhower, Dwight D.

You do not lead by hitting people over the head -- that's assault, not leadership.

- Eisenhower, Dwight D.

Pull the string, and it will follow wherever you wish. Push it, and it will go nowhere at all.

- Eisenhower, Dwight D.

To be a leader of men one must turn one's back on men.

- Ellis, Havelock

Our chief want in life is somebody who will make us do what we can.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The measure of a great leader, is their success in bringing everyone around to their opinion twenty years later.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

The first thing a great person does, is make us realize the insignificance of circumstance.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

We are reformers in the spring and summer, but in autumn we stand by the old.

Reformers in the morning, and conservers at night.

- Emerson, Ralph Waldo

In really good companies, you have to lead. You have to come up with big ideas and express them forcefully. I have always been encouraged -- or sometimes forced -- to confront the very natural fear of being wrong. I was constantly pushed to find out what I really thought and then to speak up. Over time, I came to see that waiting to discover which way the wind was blowing is an excellent way to learn how to be a follower.

- Enrico, Roger

A leader is someone who helps improve the lives of other people or improve the system

they live under.

- Ervin, Sam

There is no necessary connection between the desire to lead and the ability to lead, and even less the ability to lead somewhere that will be to the advantage of the led

- Evans, Bergen

A boss creates fear, a leader confidence. A boss fixes blame, a leader corrects mistakes. A boss knows all, a leader asks questions. A boss makes work drudgery, a leader makes it interesting. A boss is interested in himself or herself, a leader is interested in the group.

- Ewing, Russell H.

Right or wrong, the customer is always right.

- Field, Marshall

Who has not served cannot command.

- Florio, John

The person who renders loyal service in a humble capacity will be chosen for higher responsibilities, just as the biblical servant who multiplied the one pound given him by his master was made ruler over ten cities...

- Forbes, B. C.

Time and money spent in helping men to do more for themselves is far better than mere giving.

- Ford, Henry

Search others for their virtue, and yourself for your vices.

- Fuller, R. Buckminster

All of the great leaders have had one characteristic in common: it was the willingness to confront unequivocally the major anxiety of their people in their time. This, and not much else, is the essence of leadership.

- Galbraith, John Kenneth

I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people.

- Gandhi, Mahatma

I don't believe in just ordering people to do things. You have to sort of grab an oar and row with them.

- Geneen, Harold S.

There are no office hours for leaders.

- Gibbons, Cardinal J.

A good leader takes a little more than his share of the blame, a little less than his share of the credit.

- Glasgow, Arnold H.

Napoleon affords us an example of the danger of elevating one's self to the absolute, and sacrificing everything to the carrying out of an idea.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Life is like a dogsled team. If you ain't the lead dog, the scenery never changes.

- Grizzard, Lewis

The leader seeks to communicate his vision to his followers. He captures their attention with his optimistic intuition of possible solutions to their needs. He influences them by the dynamism of his faith. He demonstrates confidence that the challenge can be met, the need resolved, the crisis overcome.

- Haggai, John

Delegating work works, provided the one delegating works, too.

- Half, Robert

Those who can command themselves command others.

- Hazlitt, William

Ethics must begin at the top of an organization. It is a leadership issue and the chief executive must set the example.

- Hennessy, Edward

There is great force hidden in a gentle command.

- Herbert, George

The very essence of leadership is that you have to have vision. You can't blow an uncertain trumpet.

- Hesburgh, Theodore M.

In the great mass of our people there are plenty individuals of intelligence from among whom leadership can be recruited.

- Hoover, Herbert Clark

One secret of leadership is that the mind of a leader never turns off. Leaders even when they are sightseers or spectators, are active; not passive observers.

- Humes, James

Leadership in today's world requires far more than a large stock of gunboats and a hard fist at the conference table.

- Humphrey, Hubert H.

I've always found that the speed of the boss is the speed of the team.

- Iacocca, Lee

Leaders create an environment which everyone has the opportunity to do work which matches his potential capability and for which an equitable differential reward is provided.

- Jaques, Elliott

Doing what's right isn't the problem. It is knowing what's right.

- Johnson, Lyndon B.

Morale is faith in the man at the top.

- Johnston, Albert Sidney

Leaders are readers.

- Jones, Charles "Tremendous"

The wise man who is not heeded is counted a fool, and the fool who proclaims the general folly first and loudest passes for a prophet and F?hrer, and sometimes it is luckily the other way round as well, or else mankind would long since have perished of stupidity.

- Jung, Carl

Keep cool and you will command everyone.

- Justinian

It is time for a new generation of leadership, to cope with new problems and new opportunities. For there is a new world to be won.

- Kennedy, John F.

The highest of distinctions is service to others.

- King George VI

Blessed are the people whose leaders can look destiny in the eye without flinching but also without attempting to play God.

- Kissinger, Henry

The task of the leader is to get his people from where they are to where they have not been.

- Kissinger, Henry

Leaders must invoke an alchemy of great vision.

- Kissinger, Henry

You cannot antagonize and influence at the same time.

- Knox, John

If I advance, follow me! If I retreat, kill me! If I die, avenge me!

- La Rochefoucauld, Francois De

Leadership is a matter of having people look at you and gain confidence, seeing how you react. If you're in control, they're in control.

- Landry, Tom

A leader is best when people barely know he exists, not so good when people obey and acclaim him, worse when they despise him. But of a good leader who talks little when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: We did it ourselves.

- Lao-Tzu

When the best leader's work is done the people say, We did it ourselves.

- Lao-Tzu

I have three precious things which I hold fast and prize. The first is gentleness; the second is frugality; the third is humility, which keeps me from putting myself before others. Be gentle and you can be bold; be frugal and you can be liberal; avoid putting yourself before others and you can become a leader among men.

- Lao-Tzu

To lead people walk behind them.

- Lao-Tzu

The wicked leader is he who the people despise. The good leader is he who the people revere. The great leader is he who the people say, We did it ourselves.

- Lao-Tzu

It is the Vague and Elusive. Meet it and you will not see its head. Follow it and you will not see its back.

- Lao-Tzu

Most of the ladies and gentlemen who mourn the passing of the nation's leaders wouldn't know a leader if they saw one. If they had the bad luck to come across a leader, they would find out that he might demand something from them, and this impertinence would put an abrupt and indignant end to their wish for his return.

- Lapham, Lewis H.

A leader has the vision and conviction that a dream can be achieved. He inspires the power and energy to get it done.

- Lauren, Ralph

I'm their leader, I've got to follow them.

- Ledru-Rollin, Alexandre

Public sentiment is everything, with it nothing can fail, without it nothing can succeed.

- Lincoln, Abraham

It is a characteristic of all movements and crusades that the psychopathic element rises to the top.

- Lindner, Robert

The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and the will to carry on. The genius of a good leader is to leave behind him a situation which common sense, without the grace of genius, can deal with successfully.

- Lippmann, Walter

There is no such thing as a perfect leader either in the past or present, in China or elsewhere. If there is one, he is only pretending, like a pig inserting scallions into its nose in an effort to look like an elephant.

- Liu Shao-Ch'i

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.

- Lombardi, Vince

Leaders are made, they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price which all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile.

- Lombardi, Vince

The leader can never close the gap between himself and the group. If he does, he is no longer what he must be. He must walk a tightrope between the consent he must win and the control he must exert.

- Lombardi, Vince

Some men must follow, and some command, though all are made of clay.

- Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth

The speed of the leader determines the rate of the pack.

- Lukas, Wayne

There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.

- Machiavelli, Niccolo

Men shrink less from offending one who inspires love than one who inspires fear.

- Machiavelli, Niccolo

Popularity is not leadership.

- Marcinko, Richard

Leadership is the other side of the coin of loneliness, and he who is a leader must always act alone. And acting alone, accept everything alone.

- Marcos, Ferdinand E.

He is the richest man who enriches his country most; in whom the people feel richest and proudest; who gives himself with his money; who opens the doors of opportunity widest to those about him; who is ears to the deaf; eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame. Such a man makes every acre of land in his community worth more, and makes richer every man who lives near him.

- Marden, Orison Swett

The golden rule for every business man is this: Put yourself in your customer's place.

- Marden, Orison Swett

That perfect bliss and sole felicity, the sweet fruition of an earthly crown.

- Marlowe, Christopher

Only one man in a thousand is a leader of men -- the other 999 follow women.

- Marx, Groucho

The most important quality in a leader is that of being acknowledged as such.

- Maurois, Andre

A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way.

- Maxwell, John C.

Leadership is action, not position.

- McGannon, Donald H.

A leader who doesn't hesitate before he sends his nation into battle is not fit to be a leader.

- Meir, Golda

That is no use at all. What I want is men who will support me when I am in the wrong.

- Melbourne, Lord

When I think of this life I have led; the desolation of solitude it has been; the masoned, walled-town of a Captain's exclusiveness, which admits but small entrance to any sympathy from the green country without -- oh, weariness! heaviness! Guinea-coast slavery of solitary command!

- Melville, Herman

The real leader has no need to lead -- he is content to point the way.

- Miller, Henry

A crown, golden in show is but a wreath of thorns.

- Milton, John

Impatience is the cause of most of our irregularities and extravagances Command by obeying.

- Motto

The wealth of kings is in the affections of their subjects.

- Motto

Leadership involves finding a parade and getting in front of it.

- Naisbitt, John

To be a leader, you have to make people want to follow you, and nobody wants to follow someone who doesn't know where he is going.

- Namath, Joe

Show me the leader and I will know his men. Show me the men and I will know their leader.

- Newcomb, Arthur W.

I don't think that a leader can control to any great extent his destiny. Very seldom can he step in and change the situation if the forces of history are running in another direction.

- Nixon, Richard M.

Leadership must be established from the top down.

- Nunn, Sam

It's important for the explorer to be willing to be led astray.

- Oech, Roger Von

A great leader never sets himself above his followers except in carrying responsibilities.

- Ormont, Jules

The high sentiments always win in the end, the leaders who offer blood, toil, tears, and sweat always get more out of their followers than those who offer safety and a good time.

When it comes to the pinch, human beings are heroic.

- Orwell, George

A prince should be slow to punish, and quick to reward.

- Ovid

Leadership appears to be the art of getting others to want to do something you are convinced should be done.

- Packard, Vance

You can lead a whore to culture but you can't make her think.

- Parker, Dorothy

The best leaders are those most interested in surrounding themselves with assistants and associates smarter than they are. They are frank in admitting this and are willing to pay for such talents.

- Parrish, Amos

We herd sheep, we drive cattle, we lead people. Lead me, follow me, or get out of my way.

- Patton, George S.

Don't tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results.

- Patton, George S.

Eagles don't flock, you have to find them one at a time.

- Perot, H. Ross

Management is about arranging and telling. Leadership is about nurturing and enhancing.

- Peters, Thomas J.

All business success rests on something labeled a sale, which at least momentarily weds company and customer.

- Peters, Thomas J.

The best leaders... almost without exception and at every level, are master users of stories and symbols.

- Peters, Thomas J.

The person who has no enemies has no followers.

- Piatt, Don

It often happens that I wake up at night and begin to think about a serious problem and decide I must tell the Pope about it. Then I wake up completely and remember that I am the Pope.

- Pope John XXIII

Among the blind the one eyed is king.

- Proverb

An army of deer would be more formidable commanded by a lion, than a an army of lions commanded by a stag.

- Proverb

When a blind man bears the standard, pity those who follow.

- Proverb, French

Those that rule must hear and be deaf, must see and be blind.

- Proverb, German

The right man comes at the right time.

- Proverb, Italian

Never do that by proxy which you can do yourself.

- Proverb, Italian

You cannot be a leader, and ask other people to follow you, unless you know how to follow, too.

- Rayburn, Sam

The penalty of leadership is loneliness.

- Robinson, H. Wheeler

The ability to deal with people is as purchasable a commodity as sugar or coffee and I will pay more for that ability than for any other under the sun.

- Rockefeller, John D.

A good objective of leadership is to help those who are doing poorly to do well and to help those who are doing well to do even better.

- Rohn, Jim

Leadership is the challenge to be something more than average.

- Rohn, Jim

The challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; be kind, but not weak; be bold, but not bully; be thoughtful, but not lazy; be humble, but not timid; be proud, but not arrogant; have humor, but without folly.

- Rohn, Jim

Perhaps in His wisdom the Almighty is trying to show us that a leader may chart the way, may point out the road to lasting peace, but that many leaders and many peoples must do the building.

- Roosevelt, Eleanor

Our true destiny is not to be ministered unto but to minister to ourselves and to our fellow men.

- Roosevelt, Franklin D.

It is a terrible thing to look over your shoulder when you are trying to lead -- and find no one there.

- Roosevelt, Franklin D.

People ask the difference between a leader and a boss. The leader works in the open, and the boss in covert. The leader leads, and the boss drives.

- Roosevelt, Theodore

The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self restraint to keep from meddling with them while they do it.

- Roosevelt, Theodore

The lead dog gets the best view. The rest of the dogs view is butt ugly. Of course, the lead dog is also the first to fall into the ravine.

- Saunders, Richard

The best leaders of all, the people know not they exist. They turn to each other and say We did it ourselves.

- Saying, Zen

Great leaders understand human behavior rather than the cybernetics of any function.

- Schorr, James

When placed in command -- take charge.

- Schwarzkopf, Norman

Do what is right, not what you think the high headquarters wants or what you think will make you look good.

- Schwarzkopf, Norman

Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. But if you must be without one, be without the strategy.

- Schwarzkopf, Norman

The world cannot be governed without juggling.

- Selden, John

The boss drives people; the leader coaches them. The boss depends on authority; the leader on good will. The boss inspires fear; the leader inspires enthusiasm. The boss says I; The leader says WE. The boss fixes the blame for the breakdown; the leader fixes the breakdown. The boss says, GO; the leader says lets, GO!

- Selfridge, H. Gordon

He who dreads hostility too much is unfit to rule.

- Seneca

When the leadership is right and the time is right, the people can always be counted upon to follow -- to the end at all costs.

- Seymour, Harold J.

The secret of a leader lies in the tests he has faced over the whole course of his life and the habit of action he develops in meeting those tests.

- Sheehy, Gail

To be omnipotent but friendless is to reign.

- Shelley, Percy Bysshe

What you cannot enforce, do not command.

- Sophocles

It is a great pity when the one who should be the head figure is a mere figure head.

- Spurgeon, Charles Haddon

The shepherd always tries to persuade the sheep that their interests and his own are the same.

- Stendhal, Henri B.

Anyone can steer the ship when the sea is calm.

- Syrus, Publilius

Reason and judgment are the qualities of a leader.

- Tacitus, Publius Cornelius

No one would have doubted his ability to reign had he never been emperor.

- Tacitus, Publius Cornelius

I am more afraid of an army of 100 sheep led by a lion than an army of 100 lions led by a sheep.

- Talleyrand, Charles Maurice De

Certainly a leader needs a clear vision of the organization and where it is going, but a vision is of little value unless it is shared in a way so as to generate enthusiasm and commitment. Leadership and communication are inseparable.

- Taylor, Claude

Leadership is the activity of influencing people to cooperate towards some goal which they come to find desirable and which motivates them over the long haul.

- Tead, Orway

If you lead a country like Britain, a strong country, a country which has taken a lead in world affairs in good times and in bad, a country that is always reliable, then you have to have a touch of iron about you.

- Thatcher, Margaret

Leadership is not a position. You are not a leader because you have the title of manager. Leadership is something that we earn from followers on a day to day basis.

- The EMS Manager Newsletter

A good leader needs to have a compass in his head and a bar of steel in his heart.

- Townsend, Robert

True leadership must be for the benefit of the followers, not the enrichment of the leaders.

- Townsend, Robert

I learned that a great leader is a man who has the ability to get other people to do what they don't want to do and like it.

- Truman, Harry S

I am a leader by default, only because nature does not allow a vacuum.

- Tutu, Bishop Desmond

A leader has been defined as one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.

- Unknown, Source

The well being of the people is the supreme law.

- Unknown, Source

The best leader is the one who has the sense to surround himself with outstanding people and self-restraint not to meddle with how they do their jobs.

- Unknown, Source

Successful leaders have the courage to take action where others hesitate.

- Unknown, Source

People try so hard to believe in leaders now, pitifully hard. But we no sooner get a popular reformer or politician or soldier or writer or philosopher --a Roosevelt, a Tolstoy, a Wood, a Shaw, a Nietzsche, than the cross-currents of criticism wash him away. My Lord, no man can stand prominence these days. It's the surest path to obscurity. People get sick of hearing the same name over and over.

- Unknown, Source

Outstanding leaders appeal to the hearts of their followers -- not their minds.

- Unknown, Source

Leadership is like the old galley ships. 100s are rowing, but only one (the captain) knows where they are going

- Unknown, Source

Leadership has to do with direction. Management has to do with the speed, coordination and logistics in going in that direction. The WORKERS are chopping their way through the jungle. The MANAGERS are coordinating, making sure the tools are sharp, etc. The LEADERS climb a tree and shout Wrong jungle!! The MANAGERS shout back Be quiet! We're making progress!

- Unknown, Source

Every leader needs to look back once in a while to make sure he has followers. Source Unknown Effective leaders are known by the questions they ask rather than the statements they make.

- Unknown, Source

Do your best to be the lead dog otherwise the view never changes.

- Unknown, Source

Efficiency tends to deal with Things. Effectiveness tends to deal with People. We manage things, we lead people

- Unknown, Source

If you want to be comfortable -- take an easy job. If you aspire to leadership, take off your coat.

- Unknown, Source

A leader is one who, out of madness or goodness, volunteers to take upon himself the woe of the people. There are few men so foolish, hence the erratic quality of leadership in the world.

- Updike, John

Leadership is an opportunity to serve. It is not a trumpet call to self-importance.

- Walters, J. Donald

Outstanding leaders go out of the way to boost the self-esteem of their personnel. If people believe in themselves, it's amazing what they can accomplish.

- Walton, Sam

When a customer enters my store, forget me. He is king.

- Wanamaker, John

Leadership is a serving relationship that has the effect of facilitating human development.

- Ward, Ted

Blessed is he who has learned to admire but not envy, to follow but not imitate, to praise but not flatter, and to lead but not manipulate.

- Ward, William A.

The world of the 90s and beyond will belong to managers or those who make the numbers dance, as we used to say, or those who are conversant with all the business jargon we used to sound smart. The world will belong to passionate, driven leaders -- people who not only have an enormous amount of energy but who can energize those whom they lead.

- Welch, John

Ronald Reagan has held the two most demeaning jobs in the country; President of the

United States and radio broadcaster for the Chicago Cubs.

- Will, George F.

Education is the mother of leadership.

- Willkie, Wendell L.

No man has ever risen to the real stature of spiritual manhood until he has found that it is finer to serve somebody else than it is to serve himself.

- Wilson, Woodrow T.

It is very comforting to believe that leaders who do terrible things are, in fact, mad. That way, all we have to do is make sure we don't put psychotics in high places and we've got the problem solved.

- Wolfe, Thomas



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