

# **The 5-Minute Guide On How To Become an Influential Leader**

**- SPECIAL REPORT -**

These days, it is common for *most* people to at some point be thrust into a leadership role. And I say 'thrust' because most of us never asked for it and never wanted it.

Leadership seems to only attract a certain type of person but unfortunately, you *need* to be in charge of others in many industries if you're going to increase your salary and earn a bigger pay check. It's not until you start managing others, that you reach the higher pay band and the perks that go with this.

But if you're not naturally inclined toward leadership, this can be tough going. This is *precisely* why we get so many sub-par managers and unhappy offices. What do you expect when the person in charge doesn't really want to be there and just finds this whole thing very, very stressful?

When you're put in this position, suddenly it becomes that much easier to sympathize with those poor leaders from our past and to put ourselves in their shoes.

And the painful part is that all of us know what a good leader looks like (and thus how far we might be from that). Good leaders are bold, brave, inspiring, charismatic...

The question is: how can you make sure that you are more like those heroes you admire and less like those stuffy managers that you dread?

# The One Rule That REALLY Matters

Actually, it all really boils down to one. There is one thing, one trait, that will help you to be a more inspiring leader more than anything else.

What is it? It's passion. It's *believing* what you do. It's a *lack* of passion meanwhile that created those stuffy, ineffectual managers. They never wanted to be there and thus they simply find the whole experience of leading very stressful. This plainly comes across in their demeanor and thus the entire team feels demotivated and disinterested.

At the same time, the disinterested manager will come across as more stressed and they'll make poor decisions for the company – they'll be trying to make sure the business 'ticks over' rather than trying to make it thrive. They'll be trying to meet numbers and targets, not trying to change things for the better.

That leads to a lack of growth and ultimately to stagnation and defeat.

It's a grim picture but it is true!

Now compare this to a young, lean startup in Silicon Valley. This will be led by a team of people who set up the business because they had a dream. They want to change the world with a new app or a new gadget and they believe in this idea more than anything. And you can *tell* that just by watching them talk about it. They put in more hours and they work harder because to them it's not work – it's the thing that matters most to them. Their team sees this commitment and excitement and they *want* to be involved.

And when they go up on stage and talk about their business, people notice that they *genuinely* believe they're doing something amazing. It comes across in their body language, their vocabulary and their tone. And thus everyone sits up and takes notice. THIS is how you become a great leader.

## Finding Your Passion

Simon Sinek talks about this concept in his books and famously his TED talk on leadership. He discusses it as the 'Golden Circle' and explains how there are three 'layers' to any business:

- What
- How
- Why

Most businesses work from the outside in. First, they ask 'what' it is that they're trying to do. That might be to make protein shakes. Once they've done this, then they ask *how* they're going to do it. Outsource manufacturing.

Then they ask 'why'? Which is presumably to make money. But turn that on its head, prioritize the 'why' and find something more exciting. Now you start with why you are driven to start a business. Maybe the answer is that you want to help people feel more powerful, more confident and more *free*. That's when you're happiest and you want to empower others to feel the same. This is a good start!

So the next thing you do is ask *how* you're going to do it and *what* you're going to sell. And the answer is protein shake. But maybe to really deliver on that promise, this protein shake is going to be different – free from artificial ingredients and fuelled with energizing vitamins.

But the whole attitude is different. Now this is a movement, it is a real motivation and it is something you can get excited about. This is something the entire team will feel and it's something that can help you to build an effective marketing campaign that gets your customers inspired and builds loyalty too.

## **The Law of Attraction – Getting and Attracting What You Want**

This passion and belief then brings with it the 'law of attraction' – it changes the way you think, act and behave and that in turn makes you a better leader.

The law of attraction is an idea that states that we eventually become the thing we see ourselves as. The way we think changes the way we act and the way we act changes the way others see us. This changes how they react to us and that helps us achieve more.

Simply believing in what you're doing and being *excited* by it will help you to take more risks, to make better decision and to take more interest in every aspect of the business. This makes you a better leader.

What's more, is that being more passionate will make you *instantly* more charismatic. Have you ever heard a woman or a man say that they find people attractive who have some kind of serious hobby or passion? That's because a passion or a real skill *makes* people more attractive – it makes them passionate, interesting and driven.

And when you believe in what you're talking about, it makes you use your entire body to discuss it: you'll find that you speak with your hands as well as your voice and that you gesticulate, motion and pace. This makes us more engaging to watch and to listen to, because we're taking up more space and because there's more *congruence* – our bodies and our voices are saying the *same thing*. People can tell when your heart just isn't in it.

This can even extend to the way you dress and the way you act. When you're passionate about your business, you'll *want* to look the part. You'll automatically put more time and effort into your appearance and you'll look more energized. Again, this makes people want to follow you more and helps you to better steer your ship.

But it also impacts on the way that you make decisions and the way that you lead the business. Being more passionate helps you to make the right decisions and helps those decisions to fuel better business.

The big reason for that is that having a passion means having a vision. When you have a vision – when you know the *why* behind what you're trying to do, it allows you to make more long-term plans and it allows you to make better decisions for the *long-term growth* of your business.

Remember how we said that leaders who didn't really want to be there would predominantly be interested in just staying afloat and meeting targets? It's true: they have no vision and thus they have no end goal.

But this completely undermines the whole point of a leader. That is to *lead* and to *guide* the organization into the future. Don't be content to just 'not fail' – rather you need to be thinking of ways to improve your organization, to scale up and to make your staff

happier. You need to find ways to better accomplish your goal and create the world that you want to see.

So once you have your vision, you can start to take your business to the next level by asking: how do I get my business to that point? How can I help my team to get to where they need to be?

## **How to Inspire Your Team and Give *Them* Your Vision**

Of course a good leader can't just have a vision of their own – they also need to know how they're going to pass that vision on to their followers and they need to know how they're going to make sure that people are as motivated as they are. How do you make your vision someone else's vision?

One important way to do this is to make sure that you explain the *why*. Make sure that your team knows why you're doing what you're doing and make sure that you use that same approach when giving smaller tasks.

This is an important distinction: when instructing your team, you shouldn't be telling them *what* to do. You should be telling them *why* it needs to be done. You shouldn't be telling them precisely *how* to do their job, only what their job is.

To put this another way, don't tell your team to build a template in HTML and then to populate that with information and images. Don't tell them to build a logo in Illustrator that includes a lemon. Instead, tell them that you have an exciting new client who wants to build a website and a brand and who wants to evoke a sense of 'freshness' and 'health'. Tell your team they can build that website

however they see fit and that you trust them to do a great job: this is *their* project.

Right away, that sense of ownership is going to make what they're doing much more intrinsically motivating. You've given your team the freedom, the ownership and the agency to do things their way and that means they can feel proud of what they've accomplished. When we're proud of our work, we work harder.

MUCH harder than when someone gives us a deadline and a threat!

At the same time, this also gives your team more freedom to work independently. If they run into a problem, they can come up with a new solution of their own. They don't need to ask you if their suggested solution is okay because they were never given strict instructions on how to go about their task in the first place.

That means that they'll interrupt you less, meaning that you can stay focused on thinking of ways to improve the business. They'll find their work much more satisfactory and rewarding and the end product will be better.

And again, it all comes from passion, from ownership and from belief in what you're doing.

## **How to Find the Passion and Vision**

If you created your own business, then hopefully you will have launched something that you're proud of and that you believe in. You should have been drawn to this industry for a reason and you can probably trace that back to a real passion of yours. If you

struggle to see your vision, try sketching it out – what do you want to create? What would your ideal world look like if your business had the impact it could do?

And if you *inherited* your leadership role, then work with your superiors to get a better understanding of the vision and passion behind that. Try to find the passion in what you're doing and if you really can't? Move on – otherwise you're doing yourself and the organization a disservice.

Now of course there's much more to leadership than that: there's communication, there's knowing how to create a team and there's learning how to stay calm in a crisis. You need to know how to make sure that everyone there *wants* to be there and to get them to work like well-oiled machine.