

# Words of Wisdom for the Successful Leader

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Having always been a fan of “words of wisdom,” I think we can all benefit by wrapping our minds around the insights of those who have traversed the pathway of success. Their proven template of quality achievement is adaptable to many of our own situations; therefore, we can learn from the high achievers as their understanding relates to our own professional endeavors.

Successful leaders have always had the ability to “go beyond the assigned responsibilities.” Not only do they complete the given task in an effective and efficient style, but they also add a difficult-to-define bit of “magic” to the way they go about their work. What is this secret ingredient that separates the exemplary student leaders from the rest of their colleagues? Many have attempted to quantify it, replicate it, diagnose it, and assess it in a way that it can be taught to others, and yet it seems (at best) very elusive. When we observe a successful leader in action, we know there is something very special about the way he or she connects with those around him or her. It is far more than mere communication. Rather, it is a sincere investment in the relationship with the intention of creating BETTERMENT for all.

We tend to label this contextual gift with such terms as *enthusiasm*, *expertise*, *people skills*, *communication*

*competence*, *proficiency*, *sensitivity*, and even *charisma*. Yes, it is all of these and more. It is the right combination of personality attributes tailored to the given leader, and it seems to be as individualized and as unique as the pattern of a snowflake. *Leader magic* is an intangible.

Perhaps the *leader magic* does not come from the mastery of a certain discipline, but rather it is a manifested reflection of the values of the leader. If this hypothesis is true, a successful leader could adapt his or her leadership skills to a multitude of learning areas. While it is arguable, the leadership skills would open the landscape of possibilities to serve as a leader in any situation, any organization, for that matter—ANY CAPACITY.

There have been many lengthy discussions bantering the reasons why certain student leaders enjoy ongoing success while others struggle to achieve a similar level of accomplishment. Undoubtedly, the controversy will continue forever; however there may be a clue to the mystery in the following words of wisdom from the pen of the popular Lebanese actor/comedian, Danny Thomas:

**“Success has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself—it’s what you do for others.”**

Therein lies the common denominator found in all successful leaders: WHAT THEY DO FOR OTHERS. Leaders are measured by what they “give”—not by what they have. ***Leadership success is not about the accumulation of various awards and trophies; it is about creating a positive atmosphere to support the success of each and every person who makes up the group, team, organization, or community.***

In the words of noted poet/philosopher Kalu Ndukwe Kalu:

**“The things you do for yourself are gone when you are gone, but the things you do for those around you remain as your legacy.”**

...Strike Up the Band...

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*Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser is a trusted friend to anyone interested in working with young people in developing a desire for excellence and a passion for high level achievement. You can hear more from Dr. Tim at the Convention/Clinic this summer.*

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