

Servant Leadership

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Servant leadership is a leadership philosophy in which the main goal of the leader is to serve. The servant leader shares power, puts the needs of the people first and helps others develop and perform at the highest level possible.

From my perspective, working with any kind of leadership group is always a privilege and an honor. With it goes the daunting responsibility of making every effort to frame the given information in a way it resonates with the listener(s). We certainly are not “running short” of data concerning the landscape-of-leadership! One need look no further than the internet to find a plethora of information concerning “leadership success.” In fact, the last time I checked, there were over four billion connections to be sought focusing on leadership. That’s far more than anyone could possibly consume in a lifetime. SO...

- Where do we start?
- What do we emphasize?
- Who are the likely candidates?
- What philosophy do we use as the foundation?
- What are the parameters?
- How do we measure the results?
- Is there some simple/understandable blueprint we can use?

....and a myriad of other valid inquiries; it is never-ending!

After 40+ years of working with aspiring leaders, here are four tried-and-true cornerstones applicable to all who want to explore the highway of SERVANT LEADERSHIP. These road-signs have been tested throughout

history, and they are virtually foolproof in the quest to lead others to a worthy destination.

WE/US over I/ME: Putting the welfare of the group ahead of personal gains requires “taming-the-ego.” It means a permanent consideration filter of: *How will this decision/action impact my followers?* Moreover, it requires the servant leader to be more cognizant of every choice, to make careful decisions based on how the outcome will affect everyone within the given community. Simply put, the realization of: *If I do THIS, it will cause THAT.* (There’s a bit of THE GOLDEN RULE threaded throughout.)

ROLE MODELING: Arguably (still) one of the most effective forms of leadership is (role) modeling what is wanted/needed from the group members. It’s a matter of “walking the talk.” In our band world we always recognize the fact that the band is a reflection of the director. When there is a director change, there is a predictable change in the culture of the band. The followers reflect the leader.

PERSISTENCE: This can be interpreted many ways, but it ultimately comes back to: NOT GIVING UP. There are certainly circumstances that require resetting-the-compass, however persistence is the wherewithal to “stay the course of action” in spite of difficulties or oppositions. It is THE potent fuel for servant leaders. It could well be the piece of the puzzle separating *what is intended* from *what is achieved*.

INTEGRITY: Integrity means doing the right thing for the right reasons. It is about exuding an uncompromising behavior pattern focusing on strong moral and ethical principles and values. In the words of former Senator Alan K. Simpson: “If you have integrity, nothing else matters. If you don’t have integrity, nothing else matters.” The famous coach Lou Holtz frames it beautifully, “There is never a wrong time to do the right thing, there is never a right time to do the wrong thing.”

As we know, the list could go on forever; we could never exhaust the supply of positive character attributes that make up the outstanding servant leader. With that said, the above four pillars provide a tried-and-true starting point. They have stood the test of time. Let us pledge to continue to explore the ongoing pathway of excellence. When we do, ALL WIN... ALL!

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

STRIKE UP THE BAND!

Following his tenure in the college band directing world, Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser created Attitude Concepts for Today, Inc. to manage the many requests for teacher inservice workshops, student leadership seminars, and convention speaking engagements focusing on the area of effective leadership training. Dr. Tim presently serves as Vice President of Education for Conn-Selmer, Inc. He is a nationally recognized voice touting the importance of arts education for every child. His books, produced by G.I.A. Publications, Inc., continue to be bestsellers in the educational community. Tim is also the Senior Educational Advisor for Music for All, and NAMM (The National Association of Music Merchants). He continues to teach as an adjunct faculty member at Ball State University, Indiana-Purdue/Ft. Wayne University, and Butler University. He is also a member of the Midwest Clinic Board of Directors and the Western International Band Clinic/American Band College Board of Directors.