



By Jack Delosa

# COMMON TRAITS OF GREAT LEADERS



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The extent to which you fulfil your vision is the extent to which you can mobilise other people towards it. Those who are able to achieve great things are those who have developed an ability to touch the hearts and minds of people everywhere. This ability is called 'leadership' and its essence is greatly misunderstood.

Any meaningful endeavour in life is going to require you to be an exceptional leader. Whether you want to be a great parent, a great partner, a great employee or a great entrepreneur, how successful you are in that endeavour will come down to how well you are able to move people.

The problem with a lot of the existing

thinking around leadership is that it doesn't recognise the importance of character. It speaks of tactics rather than intention, and it speaks of behavioural manoeuvres rather than personal principles.

Character cannot be faked and therefore leadership cannot be artificially manufactured. If you are approaching your people with the intention of 'maximising human capital efficiency', then you have already lost the game.

Efficiency is, of course, important. However, it is achieved through creating an authentic culture that is centred around a purpose, not through viewing people as resources to be exploited. Becoming a great leader is about unlearning much of what we've been taught about what it means to lead.

Leadership is about resonance. To what degree are you able to resonate with the people who look to you for guidance? In this sense, leadership demands authenticity and is strongest when your leadership style and your behaviour are a natural extension of who you are.

It was Ralph Waldo Emerson who said, 'Who you are speaks so loudly, I can't hear a word you're saying.' Sustained leadership demands that you are the person your people think you are.

I care for my people with all of my heart. Nothing brings me more joy than seeing the right people step into the right environment and flourish. The most rewarding part of my life to date has been enabling people to become somebody they hadn't imagined. I love to challenge people to do just once what they previously considered impossible and see how their entire life changes forever as a result. Their self-image, the way they view the world, their confidence, their communication, their relationships, their work – it all transforms when somebody steps into the best version of themselves.

This is what leaders do – they help people completely reimagine who they are and what is possible for them to achieve. It is the essence of contribution: to touch the lives of others in a way that makes them more, in a way that makes them shine. ■

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