

**Leadership is about
following.**

Some simple steps.

Treat your staff just the way you expect your manager to treat you.

Whenever your subordinates come up with an issue or a grievance, take a moment and think. What kind of response would you have expected, not what your boss would have given, if you took this as your issue to your manager. There you go. You have the answer. Your team member will always go back motivated and happy.

Treat them with dignity...just the way you expect your manager to treat you.

Start hating your voice. Your people already do.

More you talk, less you listen. To be in tandem with the thoughts of your people you must listen and that can only happen if you shut up and allow them to speak.

Talking less also saves you a lot of time and energy that you can surely put to better use.

Reward and reprimand. Spontaneously. Honestly.

Standing ovation only makes sense immediately after a stunning performance. Doing it three days later it would appear foolish. Spontaneity is key when it comes to reward and reprimand. Don't wait for the annual award function or the HR department to formalize the Performance Improvement Plan. Finish it off, with all sincerity, right there and then.

Formalize it later if required. In most cases you won't.

Don't be a troubleshooter. Trouble will shoot you down.

People will always find it convenient and safe to escalate issues to you. You can't challenge your own decision, can you? Push them back. Ask them if they have done enough on their own to resolve the issue.

You will help them build confidence and grow by not entertaining escalations. They will pleasantly surprise you with their capabilities.

Sherlock Holmes is dead. Long live Mr. Holmes.

Never try to find out anything about one subordinate from other. This will lead to unhealthy environment in your team. So much so, if people volunteer to share information about their peers, please don't entertain. Tell them upfront that this behavior is unacceptable.

Manage and curb your curiosity. Curiosity only kills the cat...you aren't one.

Shut your cabin door. Open your mind.

Keeping your cabin door open isn't much help if your mind is shut. Having fixed paradigms and notions about issues, situations or people is a bane. Listen carefully and don't jump to conclusions based on past experiences. Things do change. Change is the only constant. Work zero base, without baggage, every time.

People will be more open with you. They wouldn't mind pushing your cabin door open.

Smile please. Your smile is your people's barometer.

Your people may read too much into the absence of smile on your face. Their motivation may get impacted as they may relate your stern or frowning face to the pressure that you may be going through and if you are seemingly under pressure, their turn can't be too far off. In anticipation, though there may be nothing to worry, they end up cooking their own stuff which is rarely well done.

Keep smiling. For your own sake.

Ego or performance. Choice is yours.

Ego has a big appetite. It sucks lot of energy. Please remember that the show is always more important than the showmen. Never allow your ego to come in the way of letting things move. Others around you are as concerned about the organization as you are. Listen to their point of view. Mix and match it with your own to arrive at a powerful and holistic solution.

My way or highway...none of them would lead you anywhere.

Keep that gun away. Don't shoot the messenger.

People are bound to come up to you and share their observations and opinions about various things happening around them. These could be good but mostly are bound to be bad. Your reaction will determine whether they will continue to come to you. Expression of displeasure particularly blaming the person who brought it up, will ensure that they stop coming to you. Your loss.

Listen. Empathize. Assert. Resolve. Four simple steps to grievance resolution.

Reject the perfect match. Unless it's matrimony. And it's not.

Hire people who have sufficient headroom to grow in the given role. Someone who has 'been there, done that' will not stay motivated in this role for too long. Prepare yourself for attrition or negativity.

Remember a simple equation. Output = Skills X Motivation. Someone who is 70% skilled for the role will work with 120% motivation to give you 84%. Better than someone with 100% skills and 50% motivation. Simple mathematics!

Manipulate. Only if you are X-ray proof.

Your people are wise. They can mostly see through your actions and words. Your respect will not last too long if they find you putting a spin on almost everything that you say and do.

Get straight. Everyone admires honesty. Particularly your people who are so very mature.

Don't commit. Unless you are sure to keep them.

Your people blindly trust what you say. That's the kind of faith they have in you and every word that comes from you. They will not take it too kindly if something that you have said doesn't happen. Be sure that you can make happen whatever you say or commit.

Commitments, once made, must be kept. Keep a diary and jot them down if your memory isn't as good as your people's.

Your best friend's best friend isn't you.

Never ever share confidential information, even if it would be public soon, with anyone. Not even your best friend. Your best friend has some other person as her best friend who will be the next person to know this piece of information. The cycle is vicious. Don't let it start in the first place.

It's a bigger blunder if your best friend and confidante happens to be your subordinate. It dents your credibility very badly.

Decide. Promptness or perfection.

Your people will be twiddling their thumbs till you take that important decision. If you make them wait too long for the perfect decision, they may lose the motivation to take it forward. Know how much of failure-proofing is good. Don't get into analysis paralysis.

Don't swing to the other side either and dole out decisions that are not thought through and backed with sufficient data. Balance is key.

Your actions should be fair. They should also be perceived to be fair.

There's hardly anything called reality. Perceptions are what most of us live by. No matter how robust, justified and fair your decision or action is, if it is perceived to be unfair it needs a rethink.

Taking people's feelings into account along with all other data and factors while taking a decision is extremely important.

Cloning is a scientific miracle. Don't try it in your team.

No doubt you are good. That's why you are where you are. Rightly then, you expect all your team members to be like you. You feel upset when they behave unlike you. Get set...you are setting your team up for failure.

Team thrives on complementarity and variety. Celebrate and leverage the uniqueness of each individual. Assign them roles accordingly. Make them play to their strengths.

Stars belong in the sky. Why are they on your rolls?

Star performer is a myth. Your so called star performer did do something good and impressive to start with. You were impressed indeed. You became fond of the star and gave all your time, attention and support. The continued success was inevitable. Failures were forgiven and forgotten.

Try same thing with any of your team member. Results won't be too different. You create the stars. Create more stars. Lead a starry team.

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