

What Makes a Leader a Great Leader?

In a global economic downturn and a competitive market, the one thing that will set your business apart from your competitors is successful leadership. But what makes a leader a great leader?

First off, let's be clear about the definition of a leader. Leaders lead people. Managers, on the other hand, manage tasks. Managers have subordinates. Leaders have followers. There's a clear difference. True leadership is all about the being – not the doing.

Great leaders start with a vision. As Theodore M. Hesburgh once said, "The very essence of leadership is that you have to have vision. You can't blow an uncertain trumpet." What is it that you're trying to achieve? And why should others follow? As a leader, you need to live and breathe your vision and use it to navigate the direction of your business, pointing your team in the same direction.

Great leaders never stop learning. They reflect on their past, acknowledge both successes and failures, and identify opportunities for improvement – within themselves and others.

But what really sets a great leader apart is the way that he/she communicates their vision, knowledge and experiences. Great leaders inspire and motivate; they don't just present the facts but tell a story and make others believe in their dreams.

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."

- John Quincy Adams