

General Colin Powell

Chairman (Ret), Joint Chiefs of Staff

A Leadership Primer

LESSON 3

"Don't be buffaloed by experts and elites. Experts often possess more data than judgment. Elites can become so inbred that they produce hemophiliacs who bleed to death as soon as they are nicked by the real world."

Small companies and start-ups don't have the time for analytically detached experts. They don't have the money to subsidize lofty elites, either. The president answers the phone and drives the truck when necessary; everyone on the payroll visibly produces and contributes to bottom-line results or they're

LESSON 4!

"Don't be afraid to challenge the pros,
even in their own backyard."

Learn from the pros, observe them, seek them out as mentors and partners. But remember that even the pros may have leveled out in terms of their learning and skills. Sometimes even the pros can become complacent and lazy. Leadership does not emerge from blind obedience to anyone. Xerox's Barry Rand was right on target when he warned his people that if you have a yes-man working for you, one of you is redundant. Good leadership encourages everyone's evolution.

LESSON 5

"Never neglect details. When everyone's mind is dulled or distracted the leader must be doubly vigilant."

LESSON 6

"You don't know what you can get away with until you try."

You know the expression, "it's easier to get forgiveness than permission." Well,

LESSON 7

1. The first part of the lesson is a short story about a man who is very poor and has to work very hard to support his family.

2. The second part of the lesson is a dialogue between two people who are talking about the man in the story.

3. The third part of the lesson is a list of questions and answers about the story and the dialogue.

4. The fourth part of the lesson is a short exercise where you have to write a few sentences about the man in the story.

5. The fifth part of the lesson is a short exercise where you have to write a few sentences about the dialogue.

6. The sixth part of the lesson is a short exercise where you have to write a few sentences about the questions and answers.

7. The seventh part of the lesson is a short exercise where you have to write a few sentences about the short exercise.

8. The eighth part of the lesson is a short exercise where you have to write a few sentences about the short exercise.

9. The ninth part of the lesson is a short exercise where you have to write a few sentences about the short exercise.

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21. The twenty-first part of the lesson is a short exercise where you have to write a few sentences about the short exercise.

22. The twenty-second part of the lesson is a short exercise where you have to write a few sentences about the short exercise.

23. The twenty-third part of the lesson is a short exercise where you have to write a few sentences about the short exercise.

24. The twenty-fourth part of the lesson is a short exercise where you have to write a few sentences about the short exercise.

LESSON 8

"Organization doesn't really accomplish anything. Plans don't accomplish anything, either. Theories of management don't much matter. Endeavors succeed or fail because of the people involved. Only by attracting the best people will you accomplish great deeds."

In a brain-based economy, your best assets are people. We've heard this expression so often that it's become trite. But how many leaders really "walk the talk" with this stuff? Too often, people are assumed to be empty chess pieces to be moved around by grand viziers, which may explain why so many top managers immerse their calendar time in deal making, restructuring and the latest management fad. How many immerse themselves in the goal of creating an environment where the best, the brightest, the most creative are attracted, retained and, most importantly, unleashed?



"Organization charts and fancy titles count for next to nothing."

Organization charts are frozen, anachronistic photos in a work place that ought to be as dynamic as the external environment around you. If people really followed organization charts, companies would collapse. In well-run organizations, titles are also pretty meaningless. At best, they advertise some authority, an official status conferring the ability to give orders and induce obedience. But titles mean little in terms of real power, which is the

LESSON 10

"Never let your ego get so close to your position that when your position goes, your ego goes with it."

Too often, change is stifled by people who cling to familiar turfs and job descriptions. One reason that even large organizations wither is that managers won't challenge old, comfortable ways of doing things. But real leaders understand that, nowadays, every one of our jobs is becoming obsolete. The proper response is to obsolete our activities before someone else does. Effective leaders create a climate where people's worth is determined by their willingness to learn new skills and grab new responsibilities, thus perpetually reinventing their jobs. The most important question in performance evaluation becomes not, "How well did you perform your job since the last time we met?" but, "How much did you change it?"

LESSON 11

"Fit no stereotypes. Don't chase the latest management fads. The situation dictates which approach best accomplishes the team's mission."

Flitting from fad to fad creates team confusion, reduces the leader's credibility, and drains organizational coffers. Blindly following a particular fad generates rigidity in thought and action. Sometimes speed to market is more important than total quality. Sometimes an unapologetic directive is more appropriate than participatory discussion. Some situations require the leader to hover closely; others require long, loose leashes. Leaders honor their core values, but they are flexible in how they execute them. They understand that management techniques are not magic mantras but simply tools to be reached for at the right times.



LESSON 13

"Powell's Rules for Picking People:"

- Look for intelligence and judgment, and most critically, a capacity to anticipate, to see around corners. Also
- look for loyalty, integrity, a high energy drive, a balanced ego, and the drive to get things done.

HANSSON 14

"Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate and doubt, to offer a solution everybody can understand."

Effective leaders understand the KISS principle, Keep It Simple, Stupid. They articulate vivid, over-arching goals and values, which they use to drive daily behaviors and choices among competing alternatives. Their visions and priorities are lean and compelling, not cluttered and buzzword-laden. Their decisions are crisp and clear, not tentative and ambiguous. They convey an unwavering firmness and consistency in their actions, aligned with the picture of the future they paint. The result: clarity of purpose, credibility of leadership, and integrity in organization.

LESSON 15

Part I: "Use the formula $P=40$ to 70 , in which P stands for the probability of success and the numbers indicate the percentage of information acquired."



"The commander in the field is always right and the rear echelon is wrong, unless proved otherwise."

Too often, the reverse defines corporate culture. This is one of the main reasons why leaders like Ken Iverson of Nucor Steel, Percy Barnevik of Asea Brown Boveri, and Richard Branson of Virgin have kept their corporate staffs to a bare-bones minimum - how about fewer than 100 central corporate staffers for global \$30 billion-plus ABB? Or around 25 and 3 for multi-billion Nucor and Virgin, respectively? Shift the power and the financial accountability

LESSON 17

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

LESSON 18

"Command is lonely."

Harry Truman was right. Whether you're a CEO or the temporary head of a project team, the buck stops here. You can encourage participative management and bottom-up employee involvement, but ultimately the essence of leadership is the willingness to make the tough, unambiguous choices that will have an impact on the fate of the organization. I've seen too many non-leaders flinch from this responsibility. Even as you create

“Leadership is the art of accomplishing
more than the science of management