

A Tool Kit for Leading Peers in a Governance Setting

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But First –
An Opening Primer

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So, don't sweat "what should my leadership style be?" Instead, look in the mirror.

- Please keep in mind:
 - Empirical research, practice and decades of experience supports that ***leadership style does not predict performance, leader behavior does.***
 - In short, leadership is about ***who you are*** (your character) ***and what you do*** (your decision making process).
 - The most effective and successful leaders constantly look in the mirror and work on those two things. Please reflect on who you are and how you make decisions as you listen and participate.

Character?

“Reputation is the shadow. Character is the tree.”

A. Lincoln

- It is not your “personality.”
- Greek source of the word: *kharakter*, meaning “engraved mark,” “imprint on the soul,” and can be even traced further back to words that mean “to engrave.”
- Bottom line, it is called this because it is yours; it is your unique mark on this world. And you control it.
- Character is your pattern of behavior, thoughts and feelings based on universal moral and ethical principles...but most importantly, having character means having the strength to live by those principles every day – and character is tested.
- You can build – and recraft -- your own “mark” on this world because the greatest influence on your own character is within your power: it is how you respond to situations builds and defines your character. Every decision you make is “a rep in the gym of moral character” ...you’re building strength...or getting weaker.

Leading peers is hard...leading peers in a *governance* setting is even harder. Some of your challenges:

- Legitimacy of your leadership...*depends* (positional, yes, but how much authority, why, and who knows?; plus the fact true legitimacy must be earned and re-earned constantly)
- The length of your tenure
- Full spectrum of knowledge, talent and interpersonal skills among those you are leading
- Full spectrum of ideas and agendas among those you are leading and your influential stakeholders
- Full spectrum of control by hierarchy (apathy/crisis-only; rubber stamp; threat-based; fully engaged and positive)
- Need for transparency in all things
- Need for trust... “we operate at the speed of trust.”
- Extreme importance of communication; “leader language” adapted for conditions
- Depending on what you inherit as a leader, you will probably have to lead change of some kind
- The need to lead from the front, the center and the rear...and knowing where should be leading

Offering a menu of relevant tribal wisdom and scar tissue:

- Gaining consensus: trust comes first, then it's an iterative art
- Tips on “leader language”
- Climate setting techniques and their critical importance
- Steps in leading change
- Dealing with a tough boss; a peer leader heading in the wrong direction; people with problems
- The important difference between Mission and Vision (and their use)
- “Hey, where are the great ideas?” ...leading innovation.
- Dealing with that feeling of ... “But I really have no control...”
- Some tips for communicating effectively
- Understanding – and noting – decision fatigue
- Negotiations 101
- The personal value and impact that comes with defining success
- “The best leaders I've ever seen...”