

Effective Leadership

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What is Leadership?

Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2007).

It is the actions of the followers who determine whether a leader is successful.



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Many Kinds of Leadership

Technical

- project lead, program manager, NSF co-PI

Informal

- getting a paper accepted, building support for candidate, where to eat lunch...

Professional Activities

- program chair, conference chair, department committee, professional leadership, CRA-W
- standards groups, edit/review

Management

- Department Head, Dean, Manager



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Why Bother?

Influence organization in directions you like.

Have a greater impact via longer lever arm.

Enable “Snowball Effect”

Once you are seen as an effective leader, more opportunities become available.

Provides personal rewards



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How to Become a Leader?

Act like one: Show initiative & vision.

Be trustworthy

Follow through on commitments in a timely fashion.

Treat people fairly and with respect.

Demonstrate ability to work with others

Let people know you are interested

Work to acquire qualifications

Find a mentor to help



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So, now you are a leader...



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Communication

Provide a stable environment so people know how to succeed.

Allows them to make decisions you would agree with even if they can't reach you.

Don't be the bottleneck

Respect the time of people dependent on you.

May require increased delegation.

Listen well

Make sure you can summarize others' positions to their satisfaction.

Be open to negative feedback

Otherwise, situations can blow up.



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Meetings

Plan meetings to be productive

What do you want to accomplish?

What is the most effective way to do that?

A lot of the work of a successful meeting is done in advance.

Avoid putting people on the spot

Find out people's positions before asking for public comments.



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Change

It is okay/great/necessary to change things, but know why you are changing them.

What do you hope to accomplish?

What are the likely and acceptable costs?

How will you know it is working?

Get buy-in as part of the process.

Sometimes the riskiest choice is to try to avoid all risk.



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Constant Improvement

Learn from watching others

What do they do that you like? dislike?

Borrow, but adapt to who you are.

Continue to find mentors



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Scenario Breakouts

- Two scenarios:
 - Break into small groups to discuss approaches
 - Group discussion to hear ideas



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Scenario 1: The Hiring Meeting

- Two finalists in different research areas, but only one position. Both are strong candidates
- You strongly support your candidate
- The department is split: 4-4
- What might you do to resolve the situation **in favor** of your candidate?



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Scenario 2: Leading from the Bottom

- You are in a research group as either a graduate student or the junior faculty member. There are two people above you and 4 below you in terms of “rank”
- You believe that you have a better idea of how to refocus the research than the two much more senior members of the team.
- How do you convince the team to go in your direction which is a fairly large departure from the current plan of action?



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