



Do You Feel Abandoned by the Old Leadership Model?

Setting a Better Standard for the Next Decade
With **Nine Essentials of Significant Leadership**



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Nine Essentials of Significant Leadership



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Nine Essentials of Significant Leadership



The Deficiency of the Old Model

As we head into the third decade of the 21st Century, facing a still raging pandemic, a weakened economy and nasty political divisions, the need for **significant leadership** has never been more acute. The generic, efficiency leadership model of the 20th Century will not guide companies, the nation, or the world out of the current plight because to a very large extent, efficiency leadership is what led to the situation in the first place.

Efficiency leadership is only one fractional step above management. It focuses on success, productivity, achieving more with less, the accumulation of wealth, profit, accolades and market share. While there is nothing inherently wrong with any of these objectives at a surface level, when any one of them becomes the entire focal point to the detriment of the workforce, it can become much more destructive than it is productive.

A Better Option for 2021 and Beyond

Significant leadership, on the other hand, shifts the focus from building numbers to building people, truly *seeing* and valuing every member of an organization for who they are and what they bring to the table. Based on a foundation of servant leadership, significant leadership seeks to create a legacy of strength in diversity, power in compassion, resilience in empathy, and results from accountability. Diversity is essential to a functioning society. While one of the core goals of all leadership should be to replace oneself, significant leaders strive to build new significant leaders in exponential numbers for a more universally inclusive generation of leaders who are prepared to address the issues of a global society going forward. Significant leadership allows for not only diversity, but also inclusion and equity which creates a sense of belonging and therefore a stronger buy-in to the organization's purpose, mission and vision.

Although there are many skills involved in developing leadership, there are **nine essential** concepts that are absolutely required for **significant** leadership.

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1) Understand Your Own Value

Significant leaders have a core knowledge of their own value. They understand that they, like every human being on the planet, are worthy of merit simply because they exist. Human value is not determined by who one's parents are, their country of origin, who they're married to or dating, what their title or position is, how much money they have or make, what their abilities or disabilities might be, what size they wear, what color their skin, hair or eyes are – or any other external factor society might use to place value on a person. Every person's value rests simply in the fact that they exist. That value doesn't have to be earned and it cannot be purchased. It just *is*.

Understanding one's own value, and that their value is not affected by anything external to themselves, frees significant leaders to be humble. That may seem contradictory, but a leader can be confident and humble at the same time. Arrogance grows out of a lack of self-esteem, not an over-abundance of it.

2) Treat All Persons With Respect

There is a profound difference between respect for a person and respect to a person. My father, "The Colonel" used to say, "You don't have to respect everyone, kiddo. You have no right to disrespect anyone, young lady." In his book, *How to Deal With Difficult People*, Paul Friedman made this intentional commitment, "I choose to treat this person with respect, whether or not I like what they think, say or do." There is a strong probability that you will encounter someone that, for whatever reason – maybe their behavior, the words they choose, the way they treat others, differing ethics, whatever the reason – you can in NO way respect them. **Significant leaders still choose to treat them with respect.**

Even if someone is not treating you with respect, you can make the choice to treat them with respect. The operative in the previous sentence is, of course, choice. It is an intentional

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choice that significant leaders make every day. (And on rougher days, sometimes that choice has to be made every hour or every five minutes!)

Treating all persons with respect, even in the most difficult of circumstances, does not make someone weak. Quite the opposite, choosing to treat someone with respect in the face of being disrespected shows extreme strength of character. You can't lead someone if they feel disrespected by you, or if they see you treating others disrespectfully. **Significant leaders make the daily choice to treat all people with respect at all times, regardless of what they think, say, or do.**

3) Act With Integrity At All Times

Simply put, integrity is doing what is right because it's right, every time, whether anyone is looking or not. Significant leaders are intentional in that integrity. That includes but is not limited to choices they make in their professional lives, their personal lives and how they treat people who can ostensibly do nothing "for" them. It also includes financial decisions and consistency in commitments made, among many other things. A team may not fully understand their leader's vision; they may not agree with their leader's decisions; a team member doesn't even have to like their leader very much; but a team has to trust their leader or they will refuse to be led. Acting with integrity at all times requires extra vigilance and thought, but it is the only way that trust is built.

It was once said (by the great philosopher Anonymous) that, "integrity is what happens in the dark." **There are thousands upon thousands of individual ethical choices that significant leaders need to make (seemingly in the dark) every day, but they are always guided by the principle of doing what is right because it's right, every time, whether anyone is looking or not.**

4) Open Your Mind to New Possibilities

Significant leaders know that they don't know everything or have all the answers. Only a bloated ego and a closed mind believes that they have a complete or unlimited knowledge, awareness, or understanding. **Significant leaders understand what has worked in the past may act as a starting point, but by the mere fact that it was in the past, it may not be the best choice going forward.** Looking at new ways of doing things, taking

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different routes to the desired end point, allowing alternative voices to lead the conversation and thought-process are all necessary elements to bring about the best end result. Communicating to your team that you know you are not supposed to be the one with all the answers empowers each individual member to contribute their knowledge and expertise toward the solution or the desired outcome. **Significant leaders are purposeful in tapping into the knowledge and strengths of others.** This allows them to see, enhance and seize upon opportunities for their team that they would not have been able to visualize on their own.

5) Craft a Vision

While crafting a vision may seem like Leadership 101 material, its importance is deeper and richer than it might seem at a surface level. It is certainly important for the leader to establish and communicate what the team's objective goal is and what their priorities are in getting to that goal. Significant leaders go beyond the superficial layer. Ideally, a leader would gather input from the team and craft a vision that incorporates that input into the story of the ultimate vision.

Often, a leader is constrained in that the objective and priorities have already been decided by someone higher on the organizational chart. In that situation, significant leaders dig deep into the given objective and what they know about their individual team members, to craft a vision for what it will look like for each team member when the objective is achieved. Why should it matter to them individually? How will it benefit them or something/someone that matters to them? **Significant leaders focus on the why behind the what when casting a vision for their team.**

6) Communicate Respectfully

Significant leaders endeavor to ensure all people feel safe and treated with respect in their presence while they stand their own ground and they get their message across. Most people believe that a leader's first communication priority is to be assertive and clear. In an emergency, when there is imminent danger, this is absolutely the only objective, but in any other situation it is not. Many people are very clear in their

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communication and also leave a trail of human ruin behind them as they do business. Furthermore, while respectful communication is always assertive, not all assertive communication is necessarily respectful.

Significant leaders always communicate respectfully. Therefore, the communication objective of leadership should be three-fold. First, all people feel safe and treated with respect in your presence. (If someone does not feel safe – physically, intellectually or emotionally – in a conversation, they will close themselves off and not be open to engaging in that conversation. By the same token, if someone feels disrespected, they will shut down or engage in the communication from a position of anger.) Second, stand your own ground. Third, get your message across. While this may seem a bit backward based upon conventional wisdom, our research and experience have proven that when these objectives are placed out of that order, communication breaks down and the whole organization becomes less effective.

7) Lead By Example

It was Ralph Waldo Emerson who originally said, “What you do speaks so loudly I can not hear what you say.” Everyone watches those in a leadership position looking for behaviors to emulate, and looking for inconsistencies in their behavior to criticize.

Significant leaders understand this and lead by example at all times.

If there is a company imperative of “all hands on deck” until a particular order is filled, or until a crisis situation is over, but the leader chooses to take the afternoon off, the team will seize upon that inconsistency and the fabric of trust will have been torn. If the company policy establishes strict guidelines on the use of company credit cards but the leader regularly uses their card for personal expenses believing that “it’s okay so long as I pay it back in a timely manner,” the team will see that as a hypocrisy and be unwilling to follow company guidelines themselves.

The question, “If someone I value saw this behavior, (or heard what I just said,) would that make me feel proud, or would that make me feel like I should have done (or said) something differently?” should always be in a leader’s mind. **Significant leaders are consistently intentional in exhibiting the behaviors they would expect from their team.**

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8) Celebrate The Results of Others

It is normal and natural that credit and accolades for a team's accomplishments are given to the leader. Accepting credit for the team's results communicates to the individual team member that their effort was not noticed or was insignificant.

Legendary college football coach, Bear Bryant often said, "If we win big, the boys did a heck of a job. If we squeak by with a win, we've all got some work to do. If we lose, it's all on me." The Colonel often said, "You can't take credit for the good, kid, if you're not willing to take responsibility for the bad."

Significant leaders don't seek to receive credit, but seek to give credit. Celebrating the results and success of others communicates to them that they have been seen and appreciated. They know their efforts have made a difference and will be more likely to continue in those efforts. Furthermore, highlighting the achievements of others helps them build a mental resume for themselves and their future leadership.

9) Work For Your Replacement

The principle underlying priority in significant leadership is always to replace oneself. Leaders are never born. They are always built – by situation, by opportunity or by wise counsel. Significant leaders are constantly looking for the spark of potential in everyone they lead and encounter, mentoring leadership qualities in everyone and recognizing who is rising to the top like cream.

Knowing when someone is ready for more leadership responsibility and offering it in metered doses helps build confidence in emerging leaders and empowers them to take on a stronger role going forward. By the same token, seeing when someone is not quite ready for more responsibility is equally important. Being given leadership responsibility too soon can undermine someone's confidence and prevent them from believing in themselves when the time is right. In that situation, significant leaders take the opportunity to spend more time and keep a stronger (metaphorical) hand on the pupil until they are better prepared.

Guiding and building up new significant leaders is the single most important duty of a leader.

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A Final Thought

While the 20th Century hierarchal mentality of employees as a replaceable commodity (for the purpose of making a higher profit for the stakeholders) leaked into the first twenty years of this century, it is no longer a viable working model.

Our current fragile situation, and the differing priorities of a majority-millennial workforce, are proof that if organizations want to not only survive, but also thrive going forward, there must to be a shift in focus and priorities. In fact, though these ***Nine Essentials*** concepts may seem very high-level and less practical, **our research and experience has shown that the important bottom-line factors of reduced attrition, increased productivity, customer satisfaction, market share and profitability, will all fall into place when you put a stronger emphasis on the Nine Essentials of Significant Leadership.**

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About The Colonel's Daughter

As the daughter of a career Air Force officer, Lauren Schieffer grew up being uprooted and relocated every couple of years. This imbued her with a profound independence, resilience and ability to adapt to changing circumstances. The lessons she learned from “The Colonel” have helped her make smart decisions and overcome adversity with humility and a sense of humor.

Lauren has navigated just about every aspect of corporate America in her varied career – from multiple positions with a trucking company to achieving top-tier Sales Director status for a global direct-sales cosmetics firm to managing a non-profit foundation. In her speaking and consulting career, she has presented in several countries, working with associations, organizations, federal, state and local governments, as well as Fortune 500 companies - helping them build their emerging leaders, dump the drama, improve the effectiveness of their communication and reduce unnecessary conflict.

Lauren is a Certified Speaking Professional through the National Speakers Association and The Global Speakers Federation. Able to relate to and energize everyone from the custodial staff to C-Level executives, Lauren is a master storyteller, delivering insightful, inspirational and relevant content that empowers people to absorb and act upon what they've heard – and she does so in an entertaining manner with a dry sense of humor that keeps them chuckling while they're learning.

Her enthusiasm is infectious and her passion unmistakable.

Reach Out To Lauren

When you are ready to dump the drama and improve the effectiveness of your communication, Lauren can help. **When you need someone with a proven track record of building emerging leaders past efficiency and servant, into significant leadership, Lauren is the natural choice.** Whether you are looking for an exceptional, motivating keynote, on-going training, consulting, retreat facilitation, mastermind groups or one-on-one coaching, Lauren is the one to call. **Reach out today. You'll be so thankful you did.**

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