

# The Core '4 Principles of Leadership'

by **Toye Oshunbiyi**

Take a close look at any good successful company and you will find that great leadership was always instrumental in the development and growth process. The transition of a company from small to medium to large is a function of good leadership because at each of these stages the owner's thinking has to change.

Therefore, it makes sense to acknowledge that if you can work on growing yourself to become a better leader, your organisation should grow as well. Many entrepreneurs know this; however, the main question that is asked is "How can I grow?"

In this manual, I will be explaining in a practical format, what you can do to focus and grow yourself to become a better leader and lead a successful company.

Leading is tough and it involves a lot of courage, tenacity, vision, foresight and persuasion. Over the years of leading in various capacities and researching great leaders, I have been able to isolate four core areas that a leader can simply focus on for the rest of their life and each time grow a little more to becoming the person that they intend.

## Definition of Leadership

With hundreds of thousands of books on this topic, it would be wise for me to give you my definition of leadership. I believe that '*Leadership is the capacity to influence others through inspiration*'. Another longer version of this definition is that "*Leadership is the capacity to influence others through inspiration, generated by a passion, motivated by a vision that comes from a conviction. The conviction is produced from a purpose*".

Many organisations spend thousands of pounds trying to train leaders, but without the key elements of Purpose, Conviction and Vision, you cannot have true leadership. You most likely will end up with Managers but not Leaders.

## Benefits of Becoming a Better Leader

Learning to become a better leader has so many benefits, more than anyone can imagine – One of the major problems that CEOs of businesses face is a lack of time for themselves and family. The business has grown, in some cases is successful but you have to work more hours and for many business leaders this has a negative impact on their family. Many business leaders I interview tell me that the reason for starting their own company was so they could be in control of their time, be in a position to take more time off and live the

life they want. But unfortunately this rarely happens.

If you haven't yet got to this point of freedom, it is simply a leadership issue – which I will explain in a moment. Society has changed, however the principles will never change and what we will be looking at will be those principles that are essential for you to focus on.

### What are the Core 4 Leadership Principles?

The Core 4 Leadership Principles are:

- Calling
- Character
- Competence
- Compounding

Leaders that have the most impact in the world have a sense of **calling**, they develop a trustworthy **character**, are equipped with the right **competencies**, and focus on **compounding** their efforts. If any Leader simply worked on these four areas, eventually they would see their influence multiply.

A more detailed look at the Core 4 Principles:

## 1. Calling

Winston Churchill is remembered as one of Britain's finest leaders. In his own words regarding his appointment as Prime Minister by the King, he said "I felt as though I was walking with destiny". Do you feel that this is what you have been called to do? From my research, all those who have significantly achieved something felt that it was their mission in life to do it. From Henry Ford who said that they will '*democratise the Motor Industry*' to Bill Gates saying that they will '*place a computer on every desk*' – The

Principle never changes – Great Leadership stems from a person on a Mission.

### The "I just want to make a lot of money" syndrome

It is unfortunate that many of business owners will simply say that they just want to make a lot of money with their business. It is obvious that a business should make a profit, however, what you will find with those businesses that make a difference over a long period of time is that they are more concerned with serving the customer. In response to an accusation from CEO Carly Fiorina of HP at the time about Dell being a one-trick pony, Michael Dell's response was "No, we're a two-trick pony. We satisfy customers and we make a profit."

Calling goes beyond just making money, it involves serving your customers – Peter Drucker is known for saying that "*the objective of a business is to serve the customer*". How does your product or service best serve your customer?

### Conviction

Leadership is rarely developed in a vacuum; in most cases it comes out of circumstances. Most businesses are born out of entrepreneurs seeing a gap in the market that needs filling, either to help us enjoy new ways of doing things or doing the old things a lot better. For many leaders this is where they find their conviction. Steve Jobs is known for bringing in new technology that works- his leadership obviously makes a huge difference to Apple.

What are your convictions? What annoys you about your industry,

what part of your industry is not being served properly? It is by asking questions like this that you can find your area of conviction.

## Vision

Vision in this instance is not your company vision- it's how you see the world after you have solved the issue that you had conviction about. Many of us see bad services and products but don't do anything about it. A great leader would take that product or service and turn it around.

*"I just want The Body Shop to be the best, most breathlessly exciting company – and one that changes the way business is carried out. That is my vision".*

These are the words of the late Anita Roddick, Human Rights Activist and Founder of The Body Shop.

Anita created a business that sought out natural products but at the same time had a strong conviction about maintaining the planets beauty. It was first her personal vision before becoming the company's vision. The vision was that it would change how business is carried out. What do you see?

## Passion

Don't take the next step of promoting your conviction and vision unless it is something that you are passionate about. *"Anyone can dabble, but once you've made that commitment, your blood has that particular thing in it, and it's very hard for people to stop you."*

These words from Bill Cosby the famous comedian are true; you should only start your passion campaign when you are totally committed to it. You've got to love your work – when your work

becomes play then you know you've found your passion – And when it involves providing a service or products to a target audience – you have the beginning of a great company.

## Inspiration

Passion on display breeds inspiration. When you live out your passion, there is no question of who the leader is within your organisation. Leaders such as CEO, Herb Kelleher of Southwest Airlines is known to help passengers on board their planes, spends quality time talking to customers and really is an example of the values and convictions that they hold to at Southwest Airlines.

If you haven't found your "calling" yet, that's not a problem; work with what you've got, write down your convictions, your vision and ask yourself what you are passionate about – by living this out – you will discover your calling.

## 2. Character

Knowing your calling is the 1<sup>st</sup> core principle of Leadership, however, in itself, it is not enough to make you a great one. I believe that many people have great ideas and want to offer that service or product to the world, but without the right character – you won't get very far.

Repeated patterns of behaviour over a long period of time is what forms character. It is character that enables others to trust or distrust us – simply because the behaviour we exhibit over time either allows others to trust us more or less.

Your character is the sum total of your behaviour spanning your whole life i.e. both public and private. In order to have a trustworthy character you should endeavour to be the same person in private and public – this means you are a person of integrity.

To develop good character you have to ensure first that you adopt the right thinking – give yourself time to change – not being afraid to lean into pressure situations that help shape your character – develop the ability to make good decisions even under pressure.

The bedrock of character development is self-discipline – without self-discipline you will not be able to implement a working strategy to address other character weaknesses that you may have.

The remaining character qualities are worked on for the rest of your life based on a unique motive; **Love** – unless the leader finds love in his/her heart for those he/she is leading it would not make any sense to work on the following character qualities:

1. **Patience:** is showing self-control. If a person messes up, deficiencies can be pointed out while still allowing them to keep their dignity. The goal of any disciplinary action should be to correct or change the behaviour; to train the person and not to punish.
2. **Kindness:** is giving attention, appreciation and encouragement. The best way to pay attention to people is by actively listening, giving them your undivided attention and silencing your own internal conversations.
3. **Humility:** is being authentic without pretence or arrogance. It is not thinking less of you but thinking about yourself less. It is a true knowing of yourself and your limitations.
4. **Respectfulness:** is treating others as important people.
5. **Selflessness:** is meeting the needs of others, even if it means sacrificing your own needs and wants.
6. **Forgiveness:** is giving up resentment when wronged. It is dealing with situations as they arise in an assertive manner and then letting go of any lingering resentment.
7. **Honesty** is being free from deception. It is clarifying expectations for people, holding them accountable, being willing to give both good and bad news, giving people feedback, and being consistent, predictable and fair.
8. **Commitment:** is sticking to your choices. It is a vision about individual and group growth along with continuous improvement. The committed leader is dedicated to growing, stretching and continuously improving to become the best they can be. It is also a passion for the people in the team, pushing them to become the best they can be.

The above list was taken from James Hunters book The Servant  
How are you doing in these areas?

## 3. Competence

### What are Competencies?

These are a cluster of related abilities, commitments, knowledge and skills that enable a person to act effectively in a job or situation.

### Why is competence important?

Some people are of the school of thought that leaders are born i.e. you have to be born with natural talents in order to be a great leader. This is simply not true, but unfortunately, many people shoot themselves in the foot by believing this. This third core principle of Leadership answers the question when we see or encounter people that feel a sense of calling, have an incredible character in terms of honesty and integrity but they can't deliver the goods – what is missing are the competency skills that makes leaders lead effectively.

### What Competencies are essential for any leader?

It would be difficult to rank these competencies in order of priority because some people are naturally good at some aspects but then not so good at others, however, there is one skill that everyone can always improve on and so I would say that the number one skill a leader ought to learn properly is the skill of listening.

Because leaders are normally natural go-getters, many of them find it hard to listen. I am not talking about pretending to listen, but to really listen. I am not going to go into how you can develop your listening skills but I would encourage you to ask your staff what they think- ask them on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being great) that they score you on your listening skills – this might be an eye opener for you.

Other competencies that a leader needs to grow in outside of any technical ability for his job role are:

- Ability to connect with people

- Persuasion skills
- Communication skills
- Ability to create community
- Show Empathy
- Build relationships
- Ability to hold yourself and others accountable
- Ability to delegate well
- Ability to encourage others

There are obviously many others, but these few will take a leader very far.

### Practicals:

#### What areas do you feel you can grow in?

Sign up for a training course that will teach you the skills you need to learn and then get a coach to hold you accountable for your growth.

## 4. Compounding

What does **compounding** mean?

This is a process whereby the value of an investment increases exponentially over time due to compound interest.

A great leader invests his/her valuable time, money and energy in things that yield an exponential return. Understanding this point is what could help you build a company that can last for generations because the areas of exponential growth that last the longest is when you invest in the right people.

What does this mean and how can you accomplish this?

First of all, leading is all about people- leading oneself and leading others – so it is important to understand that your people are

your greatest assets. For your business to grow, your role is to first make sure that you are constantly growing and then to facilitate the growth of your staff. You do this by:

- Enlarging People
- Empowering People
- Reproducing People

### **Enlarging People**

Enlarging people is helping them develop beyond their current ability. Most human beings need someone to believe in them. Enlarge people that you really believe can do more than they currently can – this has tremendous value for both you and the person that you are enlarging. Enlarging creates loyalty – Napoleon Hill, the author of *Think and Grow Rich*, would not have become the person we know if it was not for Andrew Carnegie who commissioned him in his early days to do a research on wealth building principles that would eventually take him 20 years to complete. At the time, Andrew believed that Napoleon had what it takes – Andrew Carnegie was an enlarger of people and a very successful businessman of his time.

### **Empowering People**

Empowering a person is giving them the responsibility to take on a task, project or case with much room for them to make decisions. Great leaders are experts at doing this. Unfortunately, many ordinary leaders see great leaders empower others but fail to take careful note of what usually happens in between the process.

What great leaders do is they ensure that the potential leader is fully trained- this can be done by the leader personally through a shadowing/coaching process or if the task needs technical skills, they make sure that the person receives the necessary training. Are you investing in the training of your staff?

Many companies that hold this as a high value have a meeting once a month and the CEO shares new learning's with his staff. This is another form of engaging and empowering because you can share your thinking and decision making process with your staff. The benefit is that they can begin to think and take on responsibilities just like you.

Bear in mind that the more people you can empower to do more jobs on their own without you having to be there, the better the leader you become.

### **Reproducing others**

Ultimately, what establishes a leader as great is when he/she starts to reproduce other leaders – This is the secret of business owners that run several companies, what they have been able to do is reproduce themselves and place those protégés in charge of one of their companies. The benefits of doing this is more than you can imagine – as it frees you up to look at new opportunities, take more time off and enjoy time with your family.

Who are you currently raising up as a leader? If you are not around for a month or two would the business continue to grow?

## Summary

I hope from this manual you've been able to identify areas that you can work on that will help you grow into a better leader. What would eventually happen as you work on these areas is that your influence would naturally increase.

So is it Calling, Character, Competence or Compounding that's your area of weakness right now? If you find yourself weak in all areas then it would benefit you if you work on Calling first, then Character and so on.

Get the training you need and find a good coach that can hold you accountable.

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He is author of the forth coming book; *'7 Essential Principles to Grow Any Business' How to use true north principles to renew your passion, increase productivity and your profits*

If you are interested in booking Toye as a speaker for your organization's next event, see contact details below.

### **About Compass Coaching & Training**

Compass Coaching & Training provides Business Coaching for CEOs and Business Leaders. Our Coaching Program helps you to discover more of your leadership abilities, refocus your vision of the future and communicate a clear action plan for the present. This has a huge impact on your business creating a level of simplicity and confidence that makes it increasingly easier to reach bigger goals, while you'll be able to experience more time away from the office doing other things of interest.

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