

Seventeen Gorman

ADVISORS LLC

"Innovation through Collaboration"



Creating Individual and Organizational Excellence via Leadership Development, Management Development, Mentoring, Coaching, Team Building, Skill Building

Achieving Excellence

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Welcome

Welcome to the July issue of "Achieving Excellence" which is inspired by clients and friends of **Seventeen Gorman Advisors**. We enjoy new ways of thinking and new ways of helping you achieve your goals.

Seventeen Gorman Advisors is a consulting practice focused on improving individual and organizational performance through skill building programs and developmental services.

Our approach to problem solving and issue resolution involves client participation at

all points in the process. Above all, we listen to our clients to understand their needs and goals so that the solution we develop together - as true partners - provides a sustainable business advantage.

Best Regards,

Jeffrey C. Leventry
Principal

In Your Quest for Excellence

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." - John Quincy Adams

The Critical Traits of Admired Leaders



A few years ago I bought a book for my daughter Jessica to help support her research on Women in Leadership Roles. The book is entitled "CEO Material - How to be a Leader in Any Organization" by D.A. (Debra) Benton.

To write her book, Debra interviewed over 100 CEO contacts to obtain their career management advice about critical traits that give birth to admired leaders. Debra suggests that you are CEO Material if you possess 16 qualities that were mentioned most often by her interview panel.

As I recently reviewed the advice contained her in book, four of these qualities jumped off the page as consistent with my own "Model of Leadership", formulated over a long career in business. They include the following:

You Can Be Trusted

Debra indicates that leaders need to set their own ground rules and stick to them no matter what. In fact, genuine leaders create a history of keeping promises, promises to others as well as to themselves. She also recommends that you should surround yourself with like-minded people of integrity. If you do, this will be a positive reflection on you and what you believe. She defines responsible leadership as "knowing what to do, doing what is needed at the time, and getting others to help because they trust you."

In my experience, trust is a key ingredient in great leaders. Trustworthiness enables

a leader to create a vision of the future that others will ultimately follow. Without trust it is difficult to expect others to believe your message and support your approach for achieving organizational goals.

You Cause People to Follow You Even Though They Don't Have To

Debra articulates that leaders need to know their audience and know their constituents. In short, they lead like others need, not like you need. To determine their needs, ask and observe to understand what motivates them. If you grasp the ambitions of others and help them to achieve and perform in stellar fashion, they will gravitate to you as someone worth following.

In my experience, Debra has it right. I have always admired leaders who understand me and my teammates or colleagues and what motivates us. Genuine leaders then ensure that needs are met (or exceeded) and demonstrate how individual goals and aspirations tie into organizational objectives. Finally, they give credit where credit is due and make sure that rewards are commensurate with individual and team contributions. Real leaders make it easy to follow them on the path of success.

You Listen More Than You Talk

Among other things, Debra argues that admired leaders are accessible, ready to listen and invite everyone to become a part of the dialogue. In addition, they ask great questions to understand the issues, gain perspective and connect with people. They are also aware of what they are saying when they are (or are not) talking. Finally, she suggests that the most effective leaders choose their words carefully and make sure they are worth hearing.

In my experience, the best leaders are insightful and take the time to understand issues so they can add meaningful commentary to the discussion. They value other opinions and test arguments and assumptions as a method of analysis. The questions they raise in any scenario are designed to engage others, challenge mind-sets and add value to the dialogue. They also create an environment where people are unafraid to raise questions or challenge authority. In summary, they generate credibility and trust in the process and offer an informed opinion that is respected and valued by others.

You Are Decisive

Debra believes that respected leaders act decisively, know exactly what they'll do and take responsibility for their decisions, good or bad. They get others on board (or sell the decision) by involving people throughout the process. This generates trust and a full understanding of the situation. It also helps to create buy-in for the final decision so the team can support its implementation. Finally, she states that genuine leaders review what happened as a result of the decision so that an honest assessment can be made and lessons can be learned.

In my experience, Debra's research reveals the essence of sound decision-making by effective leaders. The most admired leaders take time to look at the big picture and attain distance before making a decision. They avoid narrow framing of the issues and invite opposing views (including supporting evidence) by members of the team to widen the available options. They overcome the villain of confirmation bias and steer clear of short-term emotion that can sway the ultimate decision. In the final analysis, they create buy-in for the decision through integrity in the decision-making process.

In conclusion, admired leaders possess many important traits that help create organizational success. Among the many qualities that suggest that you are "CEO Material", the four that are analyzed above are the most critical.

If you would like to develop the leaders in your organization so that they reach their potential and achieve individual and collective success, please contact us.

A Proven Approach for Creating Leadership Development Programs



As referenced in the feature article above, there are several critical traits possessed by admired leaders. However, it is clear that it takes many years to develop the competencies of leaders in any organization. This is why successful firms create their own Leadership Development Program (LDP) to identify and groom their future leaders.

Several years ago I attended an ASTD (now Association for Talent Development) workshop that unlocked the secret for creating "best in class" programs to develop organizational leaders. During this 3 day seminar I learned a proven approach for building an LDP called "LEADS", which includes the following steps:

"LEADS" Leadership Development Model:

- Lay the Foundation
- Envision the Future
- Agree on and Articulate an Action Plan
- Design the Development Modules
- Sustain Momentum and Assess Progress

Each step in the process entails several key elements of the program design. For example, at the outset a project team should be created, along with a project plan that includes goals and target dates for the LDP. It is also important to develop a communication plan that will keep the organization abreast of the progress being achieved as the program unfolds.

In addition, it is important early on to align the LDP with the organization mission, vision and values. It is also critical to define an organizational LDP philosophy to lay the foundation before you start to build the program.

Looking ahead, it is helpful to link future competencies to the future business goals of the firm. A review of the firm's operational strategy should be made to support this effort.

Ultimately, critical content should be evaluated as the development modules are

being designed. The team should also consider the role of 360 degree assessments, individual development plans, and mentors in the overall program.

In order to sustain momentum and assess progress, an annual review process should be formulated to evaluate the performance of the program. Furthermore, support mechanisms need to be defined to ensure sustainability of the LDP so that long-term objectives can be accomplished. Finally, it is beneficial to link the value of the LDP to an organization's bottom line through an ROI process.

The above approach is both logical and methodical, and I have used this basic plan of action to build Leadership Development Programs with great success. While it is relatively easy to articulate the basic elements of the model, it is much more difficult to form the project team, design the program, and implement the LDP to achieve desired results. This is why collaborating with a leadership development consultant is critical to ensure success.

If you would like to develop a Leadership Development Program in your organization that grooms future leaders, please contact us so we can partner with you to achieve your program goals.

Our offerings include the following:

Developmental Services

[Coaching](#)
[Management / Leadership Development](#)
[Meeting Facilitation](#)
[Mentoring](#)
[Team Building](#)

Skill Building Programs

[Influencing Skills](#)
[Presentation Skills](#)
[Project Management Skills](#)
[Decision Making](#)

Seventeen Gorman Advisors looks forward to collaborating with you.
Please contact us or visit our website:

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