



DUPLICITOUS

Chapter 19

Follow the Leader

Sent: Tuesday, July 25 at 11:30

From: CEO

To: Executive Team

Subject: Best Practices

Attached is the most lovely note that I received from a valued client after our award ceremony the other night. I honestly was not expecting the award at all (especially at my own company event—you guys are too much, thank you!) let alone this gracious note.

It goes to show you how important hand-written notes and personal gestures are. I'm glad I took the time to send them and I hope you do to. I expect you to learn from this example.

Sharing your insights with the team is important. Of course it doesn't always mean that they will follow them, but you have to try or at least give the impression that you are trying. You can't help it if some of them are rather dim and don't get it.

But, in the event that you have a few lemmings who can actually learn from your example, it's tactics like these that need to be shared and emulated. After all, duplicity multiplies and then you're doing more with much less!

As an example, when attending events that are in your honor (as they should be, if you're attending), make sure that you follow up thoughtfully. While you don't have time to be thoughtful, there must be someone on your staff who can help you appear thoughtful at all times. One way to accomplish this is to have your assistant write hand-written thank you notes, sign your name, and send them off in a timely manner. You might be surprised by the heart-warming response you get in turn—notes of gratitude for your gratitude and

exemplary leadership and thoughtfulness. How this was executed is not the point. Like they say, “It’s the thought that counts,” and it was your idea, so there you go.

Make sure to get your whole team together when something like this happens, never let them get out of learning from your excellent example of leadership. It’s important to give everyone a very detailed account of how you did this and why it succeeded. It’s also important to set a new precedent and require that your people do what you did.

Your values and integrity should always be on display for others to emulate—including the tactics you use to display them. If this means shortcuts, leveraging the talents of others, taking credit for results generated from the innovation of others, or just appearing to be more thoughtful or resourceful than you actually are, share these tactics! Everyone will benefit from your knowledge and wisdom. And don’t be stingy with that amazing assistant of yours: once your team understands the value of this type of administrative support, they should all have access to it. He or she will simply have to understand that they are new to the game, and the charades just go with the internship.

Let’s Get Real

It’s as true as it is timeless: Great leaders lead by example. The upside of a leader who sets a good example is that, when the values he or she lives are right and good, they are multiplied and amplified so powerfully that an organization’s brand can become known for its values. And not surprisingly, when a leader leads by example with values that lack integrity or honesty or that are just downright awful, the result is exactly the same: an amplification and multiplication of that same despicable behavior runs rampant throughout the organization, damages the brand, and becomes a firewall keeping good people and talent at bay.

Leadership is infectious, in both the most positive and potentially disastrous ways imaginable. It’s your job as a leader to make sure that you lead by the kind of behavior you want to permeate your organization and out into the marketplace. As the leader you are the keeper, the steward, the guardian, and the master of those values, so make sure you live them every day in every way.

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(How Not to) Be a Leader

by Mary E. Marshall & Kim Obbink

(How NOT to) Be a Leader is the first in a series of how-not-to guides for newly minted leaders looking to avoid becoming feared or hated losers in the ivory tower or veteran leaders looking in the rearview mirror wondering where and why they ran off the road. Irreverent and hilarious, *(How NOT to) Be a Leader* shines a big bright spotlight on the oh-so-common mistakes that many leaders make when they plow forward through life and business without taking the time to really consider the effect their leadership is having on others. We've all seen and heard the horror stories of bad leadership, and hopefully many of us have been lucky enough to have been the benefactor of truly great leadership. Either way, if it's your turn at the top, *(How NOT to) Be a Leader* will help you understand what you can do to be a better leader by first understanding what you should never ever do; and if you are, why you should back up the truck, take another look at yourself and your leadership qualities, and do the work and self-reflection needed to get back on track.

Why this book series? Having been in the leadership trenches for a combined fifty years, we've seen a lot. Some good, some bad, and some really, really horrible. There was no guide for us, and we want to help all those leaders who will come after us. Not with a boring manifesto about a fictional leader who only exists in a book, but with real-life stories we've experienced or even perpetrated ourselves and vow never to repeat.

This book consists of twenty-four characteristics that you don't want to be known for. Not all twenty-four will apply to you and a few might resonate louder than others. What was it you heard in your last 360? Micromanaging doesn't work? You aren't listening? You want everyone to do it your way? You might have a few to work on, and our challenge to you is to choose three or four that seem the most immediate and start working on those. Once you've mastered them, take on a few more. And certainly share the book with those around you whose leadership styles need a little polish.

Should you accept this leadership challenge, you will be able to quickly identify twenty-four ineffective leadership traits and make changes to positively address them. Through the stories in this book, you will learn how to avoid the pitfalls of leadership, how to be a better leader, and, most importantly, how to pass good leadership on to those you lead.

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