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Great Leaders Help Others Succeed (Part I)

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In our hyper-competitive, scramble-to-the-top world, it is easy to forget about others and hone in on only ourselves and our own successes. We are constantly barraged with ways to get rich quick, climb to the top, and outpace our co-workers. The focus is often on “me, myself, and I.” But is this *really* the best route to successful leadership? Is clawing your way to the top of the heap *actually* a sustainable leadership method? My answer is a firm no.

In my mind, what separates average leaders from great leaders is the way they interact with and include those around them. A great leader reaches out to others, lifts people up, and acts as an overall positive force in the

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office. I have experienced genuine, people-centric leadership such as this, and the effect is overwhelmingly positive. Teams tend to click better, attitudes are elevated, and productivity increases.

When you're working on becoming an exemplary leader who focuses on helping others, here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. There is enough success to go around

The next time you hesitate to help a co-worker with a project or wonder if you should give someone a useful piece of knowledge, think about this: your co-worker's success is no threat to your own. Oftentimes, our instinct is to hoard our ideas or insights until we can get full credit for them, but we shouldn't approach success in this way. As Josh Becker, author and creator of the "Becoming Minimalist" movement, aptly put, "I have come to realize the mindset of competition is based on a faulty premise. It assumes there is a finite sized pie – that one more success in another's life equals one less success in mine. But quite frankly, this thinking is incorrect...Another's success does not mean I have less opportunity. In fact, another's success can actually be my success if I had opportunity to enable, encourage, and promote them along the way!"

2. You are not an island

You might think you have all the answers and are capable of running an office (or leading a team or running a campaign, etc.) all by yourself, but most of us reach a point where we rely heavily on others. We cannot (and should not!) be experts in everything, so we must depend on other people at some points to provide us with answers or insights. Additionally, most of us rely on a network of people (from IT experts to secretaries to accountants) for our day-to-day tasks and we should not take that for granted. Your success might hinge on the success of those around you. That's why it pays to seek out positive interactions with others and lend a helping hand when the opportunity presents itself. It's the idea of "pay it forward."

When Life Gives You Lemons...



Oftentimes, bad situations open the door for new, potentially amazing opportunities. [Here's my story](#) about how my company arose from a negative situation.

Leading with Humility



It's ok to learn from criticism and admit when you've made mistakes. Such acts of humility do not necessarily weaken your stance as a leader, but could strengthen it. More [HERE](#).

Body Language and Confidence

3. A little trust goes a long way.

I believe trust is a three-part concept. You have to earn it; you have to give it; you have to maintain it (More on that in [The Ten-Minute Leadership Challenge](#)). When you create an atmosphere of reciprocal trust, you'll find that many positive things will come out of it. Not only will people feel happier and less stressed at work, they will also be more willing to approach you, the leader, with a problem or personal issue. That kind of open communication allows people to problem-solve together before an issue grows out of control.

You lift others up when you trust them. You allow them to have the freedom to explore new options, think outside the box, and be creative and innovative. Isn't this the type of workplace you'd like to foster--one that makes its employees feel valued and encourages problem-solving and creative thinking?

Take Action

Next time you step into the office, make a concerted effort to help those around you. Pay attention to their dreams and goals and do whatever you can to help along the way. By helping others succeed you strengthen your team and improve your own image...but beyond that, doesn't it just feel good to lend a helping hand?

Sincerely,



Margaret Smith

Founder, [UXL: Creating Successful Leaders](#)
Author of [The Ten-Minute Leadership Challenge](#)

P.S. Next month we'll explore specific steps you can take to help others succeed. Stay tuned!



I learned early on that school just cannot teach you the "unspoken" rules of business conduct, such as how you present yourself, the words you use, and the manner in which you handle relationships and situations. All these things take time and real-world experience to truly gain mastery over. More [HERE](#).



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