

Follow the Leader

Participant Workbook

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Background

When we first began the creation of this leadership series, we did it out of a personal passion to help people become great leaders. Everyone who worked on the team has spent years in organizations and knows first hand what great and poor leadership can do. We also did lots of research and read lots of books about leadership (there are thousands). We interviewed lots of leaders and those who they lead. We drew on our own personal experiences in the workplace and in our personal lives and told each other those stories. We hypothesized that leadership is *not* some philosophical notion. Instead, it is the earnest practice of a given set of behaviors that, if understood, could be incorporated into our own behaviors and would thereby make us better leaders. But all we had at the end of our research was a theory.

So we set out to test our theory. First, we chose three people who others – colleagues, employees and peers – considered to be “great leaders.” We made sure they were diverse in their ages, their personal styles, and their roles in their respective company. Then, we *followed them around* for several days in search of what makes them great leaders. What emerged was the realization that, regardless of their gender, their age, their backgrounds, their personal style, their position in the company, or even the company culture in which they work, great leaders have six *leadership traits* in common. And those traits have several *behaviors* that are observable and indicative of great leadership.

What you will find in **Follow the Leader** is a refreshingly candid look at three leaders in action. You will also hear them talk about what *they think* is important when leading others, and you will hear those who work with and for them talk about the behaviors *they exhibit* that make them “great leaders.” The “follow segments” and the interviews with the leaders and those who work with them are totally unscripted. The host will purposefully guide you through the six leadership traits and the behaviors that exemplify those traits as they appear in the segments. She will point out what’s important to note and to think about. She will challenge you to discover how these behaviors might look *on you*.

Remember, watching these video segments (or any others for that matter) *won’t* make you (or anyone) a great leader. You need to think about and plan how to act. Then, using your own personal style, you can “try on” the behaviors and put them into daily practice in order to become *great* at leadership. The clear call to action of **Follow The Leader** is, “*You can do it, and we’ll show you how!*”

-The Follow The Leader Team

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Introduction

Meet the three leaders we followed!

Ken Hoffman

Director of Operations
Hard Rock Cafe International

Carmen Dominguez

President/Owner
Homes by Carmen Dominguez

Ron Pearson

President/CEO
Hy-Vee, Inc.

“Three leaders, three entirely different roles. So what do these three people have in common? Only the most important thing for a leader: People who work for them, think they are *great* leaders!”

In watching three people with three totally different styles, company cultures, and roles perform their everyday duties as leaders, *one* leader may begin to resonate with you more than the other two. This is a natural phenomenon we have noted with everyone who uses the program...and it is intentional. It is the identification with *one* of the leaders that makes the experience of watching them in action *so personal*.

Even though they *are* all different, these leaders have some leadership traits and behaviors *in common*. As you watch the program, think about how you can incorporate those behaviors into your own leadership style.

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Vision: Imagine the Future

Ken: A vision to me is...when I close my eyes, I see things the way things ought to be. If someone cannot perceive what ought to be, they'll never get there.

Carmen: For me, it's a very important trait to have a vision. It's an important component in being able to lead so that you have clear in your mind, what is it that you want to do.

Ron: You can't over communicate your whole vision about what you think should be done and the way [you] can go...

These quotes from the three leaders we followed show the importance of having a clear vision of what you wish to create.

Think of visionary leaders who have changed the world. What was their vision? How did their vision change the future? Write one of those visions of the future here.

To be *great* at leadership, you must have clear in your own mind the future state you wish to create in your organization, business unit, or project team. When asked, each of the three leaders we followed were able to state how they “imagine the future” of their company or business unit very plainly and concisely...*in a sentence or two!*

What is the future state *you* are imagining for *your* organization? Write a vision statement for your company, business unit, or project team on the lines below. It doesn't have to be lofty or consist of fancy words. It has to be *clear* so that people know where you are headed. That way, they can begin to understand what they can do to contribute to that end. Simply “imagine the future” you would like to be a part of creating and jot down a few words about what that “looks like.” Be ready to share your answer with the group.

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Vision: Set the Goals

Ken: A vision is the end in mind. The goals are...how you gonna get there?

Ron: So it's been pretty clear...to set both short-term and long-term goals, and I find people really respond. They really enjoy and they have fun breaking goals!

So, you now you have a vision of the future. *Setting SMART goals* for your organization will give you good milestones for getting there. But the term "SMART" is the key!

Consider the following goals. What's wrong with them?

- Increase sales.
- Decrease production flaws.
- Improve customer satisfaction.

They're not *bad* goals...but they are a little lacking. They don't tell you *how much* increase, decrease, or improvement is enough. Nor do they say *how* those goals will be measured or when! *SMART* goals are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant to the needs of your organization, and **T**ime-driven. Now consider these goals.

- Increase overall sales by 10% by the end of the year.
- Decrease production flaws by 7% by the end of the quarter as measured by the quality control team inspections.
- Improve customer satisfaction by 5% by year end as measured by web surveys to recent customers.

Remember, people *like* goals! It gives them direction and something to aspire to. Using the SMART goals above as a model, use the lines below to create SMART goals that will help you and your team achieve the vision you have of the future. Be ready to share *one* of your SMART goals with the group.

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Vision: Stretch Your Team

Ken: I'm in the people business first, and my job as a leader is to develop my folks to maximize their potential.

Carmen: The one thing that I know is that I cannot do anything by myself. I need my team. I need people. I want my team to be able to take responsibility.

In order to be a leader, you must have followers. In order to be a *great* leader, you must maximize the potential of each of your people so that they can meet the goals and achieve the vision you have given them.

Think of someone who has been influential in developing *you* or helping *you* stretch yourself. It may have been a parent, a teacher, a coach, or a boss. What did they *do* to stretch you? They may have provided a goal that, at first, seemed out of your reach! But then, perhaps they coached you along, or provided resources or other mentors to help you achieve a goal.

Write the name of the person who stretched *you*. What did they do to help you stretch?

Helping people to see they *can* grow and develop toward greatness is your role as a leader. And it doesn't always cost money either! Sometimes it is as simple as providing a little time or sharing your own experience with them.

Now, think of the people who you lead. Write some stretch goals for them, *and* ways you can support those goals by *your* actions (providing coaching, another mentor, training, or other resources).

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Summary

If you have viewed all of the video segments and filled out the workbook pages that go with them, you should now be able to:

- Define the leadership traits (below) in terms of observable behaviors
- Define these traits and behaviors in terms of your own company’s professional/leadership development goals
- Discuss how your own style may influence how the behaviors “look” on you
- Design a plan to practice these behaviors in your everyday role as a leader in your company

Leadership Traits	Observable Behaviors
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imagine the Future • Set the Goals • Stretch Your Team
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach, Teach, Teach • Listen to Understand • Know Your Audience
Love	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care About People • Believe in People • Respect People
Passion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love Your Work • Be an Energetic Catalyst • Create a Community of Work
Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be Trustworthy • Do the Right Thing • Do Things Right.
Realism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell It Like It Is • Deal with Conflict • Be Aware

By now you’ve probably noticed that most of these behaviors go hand in hand with each other. In fact, many of them are so integrated that it is difficult to even explain one without incorporating another! Don’t let that hang you up.

You *can* be *great* at leadership. You really do have what it takes, but just like anything worthwhile, becoming a *great leader* takes practice. So, think about these behaviors a bit, make your plans, and maybe discuss your plans with your own leader or a mentor. And then... get started! You’re on your way to becoming a *great leader*!

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