

Difference between Leader and Hero

omegazadvisors.com/2014/12/25/difference-between-leader-and-hero/

Mike Lehr

Tku Can, a Twitter connection, asked me to explain my quote:

The difference between leader and hero is that you don't have to be a leader to be a hero.

First, there is no doubt that they could be the same person. People like to follow heroes. That makes heroes leaders. We also find many leaders wanting to position themselves as heroes in our minds. They tell of tough upbringings, challenging lives, and selfless deeds. Courage is a main theme. This implies though that all leaders are not heroes. If leaders are heroes, why would leaders need to prove they are heroes?

One way to define difference between leader and hero is to use pictures. When I searched Google for images of leaders and heroes, quite a difference existed. Another way is to examine literature. Batman, Spiderman, Superman, Lone Ranger and superheroines help us too.

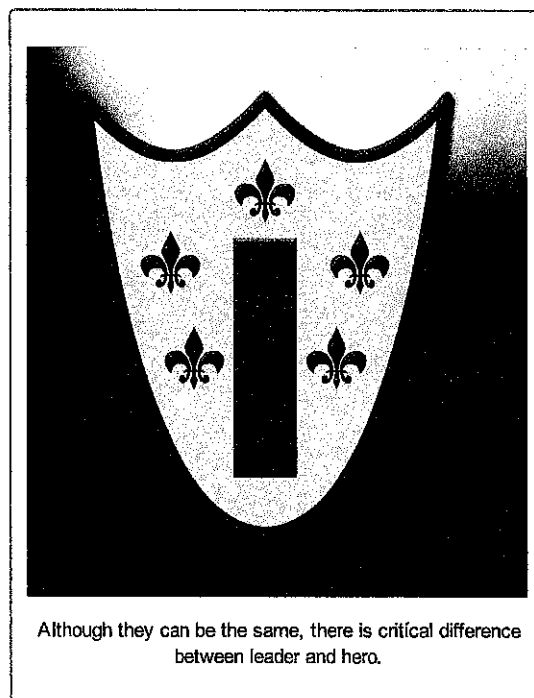
When leaders and heroes differ, we see groups versus individuals.

We see actions of people versus actions of persons. We see public versus private. We see many routine activities versus single courageous ones. We see union of self and group interests versus sacrifice of self-interest for others' interests.

It is hard to imagine leaders without followers, leaders who do not galvanize or command others. It is hard to imagine leaders who are anonymous, unknown to others. Leaders have daily responsibilities for their groups. They challenge us. They operate in the light.

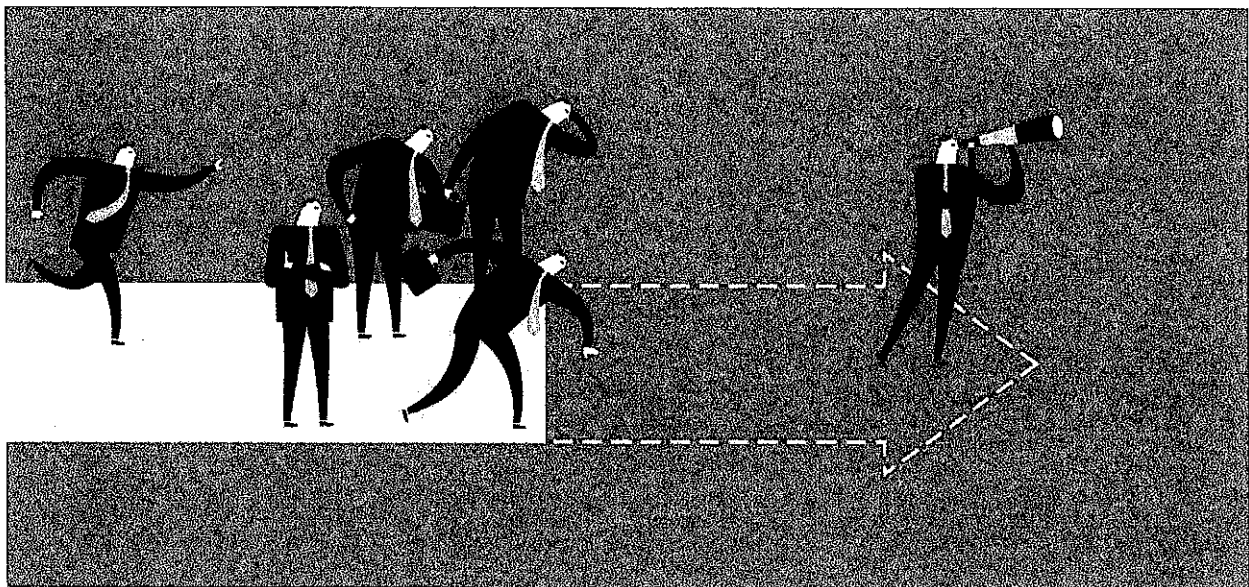
Heroes do not need followers. We do not need to know heroes. They do not ask of us. Their interests do not need to coincide. They sacrifice. They neither ask nor expect to get anything from us in return. They operate in the dark.

My four-year-old niece was visiting. She lost her princess water cup. She always goes to bed with it. She cried when her parents forced her to go to bed without it. The next morning, while everyone was asleep and I was heading out to clients, I found it. When I returned at the end of the day, she hugged and thanked me before I had walked two steps inside. At that point, not for an instance, did that little girl see me as her leader.



The 9 Traits That Define Great Leadership

To motivate your team to achieve the highest levels of performance (and create an extraordinary organization in the process), here are the qualities you should model every day.



Many leaders are competent, but few qualify as remarkable. If you want to join the ranks of the best of the best, make sure you embody all these qualities all the time. It isn't easy, but the rewards can be truly phenomenal.

1. Awareness There is a difference between management and employees, bosses and workers. Leaders understand the nature of this difference and accept it; it informs their image, their actions, and their communication. They conduct themselves in a way that sets them apart from their employees--not in a manner that suggests they are better than others, but in a way that permits them to retain an objective perspective on everything that's going on in their organization.

2. Decisiveness All leaders must make tough decisions. It goes with the job. They understand that in certain situations, difficult and timely decisions must be

made in the best interests of the entire organization, decisions that require a firmness, authority, and finality that will not please everyone. Extraordinary leaders don't hesitate in such situations. They also know when not to act unilaterally but instead foster collaborative decision making.

3. Empathy Extraordinary leaders praise in public and address problems in private, with a genuine concern. The best leaders guide employees through challenges, always on the lookout for solutions to foster the long-term success of the organization. Rather than making things personal when they encounter problems, or assigning blame to individuals, leaders look for constructive solutions and focus on moving forward.

4. Accountability Extraordinary leaders take responsibility for everyone's performance, including their own. They follow up on all outstanding issues, check in on employees, and monitor the effectiveness of company policies and procedures. When things are going well, they praise. When problems arise, they identify them quickly, seek solutions, and get things back on track.

5. Confidence Not only are the best leaders confident, but their confidence is contagious. Employees are naturally drawn to them, seek their advice, and feel more confident as a result. When challenged, they don't give in too easily, because they know their ideas, opinions, and strategies are well-informed and the result of much hard work. But when proven wrong, they take responsibility and quickly act to improve the situations within their authority.

6. Optimism The very best leaders are a source of positive energy. They communicate easily. They are intrinsically helpful and genuinely concerned for other people's welfare. They always seem to have a solution, and always know what to say to inspire and reassure. They avoid personal criticism and pessimistic thinking, and look for ways to gain consensus and get people to work together efficiently and effectively as a team.

7. Honesty Strong leaders treat people the way they want to be treated. They are extremely ethical and believe that honesty, effort, and reliability form the foundation of success. They embody these values so overtly that no employee doubts their integrity for a minute. They share information openly, and avoid spin control.

8. Focus Extraordinary leaders plan ahead, and they are supremely organized. They think through multiple scenarios and the possible impacts of their decisions, while considering viable alternatives and making plans and strategies--all targeted toward success. Once prepared, they establish strategies, processes, and routines so that high performance is tangible, easily defined, and monitored. They communicate their plans to key players

and have contingency plans in the event that last-minute changes require a new direction (which they often do).

9. Inspiration Put it all together, and what emerges is a picture of the truly inspiring leader: someone who communicates clearly, concisely, and often, and by doing so motivates everyone to give his or her best all the time. They challenge their people by setting high but attainable standards and expectations, and then giving them the support, tools, training, and latitude to pursue those goals and become the best employees they can possibly be.

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What Is Leadership?



By the
Mind Tools
Editorial Team

Leaders are people who do the right thing; managers are people who do things right.

– Professor Warren G. Bennis

Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.

– Dwight D. Eisenhower

The word "leadership" can bring to mind a variety of images. For example:

- A political leader, pursuing a passionate, personal cause.
- An explorer, cutting a path through the jungle for the rest of his group to follow.
- An executive, developing her company's strategy to beat the competition.

Leaders help themselves and others to do the right things. They set direction, build an inspiring

vision, and create something new. Leadership is about mapping out where you need to go to "win" as a team or an organization; and it is dynamic, exciting, and inspiring.

Yet, while leaders set the direction, they must also use management skills to guide their people to the right destination, in a smooth and efficient way.

In this article, we'll focus on the process of leadership. In particular, we'll discuss the "transformational leadership" model, first proposed by James MacGregor Burns and then developed by Bernard Bass. This model highlights visionary thinking and bringing about change, instead of management processes that are designed to maintain and steadily improve current performance.

Note:

Leadership means different things to different people around the world, and different things in different situations. For example, it could relate to community leadership, religious leadership, political leadership, and leadership of campaigning groups.

This article focuses on the Western model of individual leadership, and discusses leadership in the workplace rather than in other areas.

Leadership: A Definition

According to the idea of **transformational leadership** , an effective leader is a person who does the following:

1. Creates an inspiring vision of the future.
2. Motivates and inspires people to engage with that vision.
3. Manages delivery of the vision.
4. Coaches and builds a team, so that it is more effective at achieving the vision.

Leadership brings together the skills needed to do these things. We'll look at each element in more detail.

1. Creating an Inspiring Vision of the Future

In business, a vision is a realistic, convincing and attractive depiction of where you want to be in the future. Vision provides direction, sets priorities, and provides a marker, so that you can tell that you've achieved what you wanted to achieve.

To create a vision, leaders focus on an organization's **strengths** by using tools such as **Porter's Five Forces** 🌐, **PEST Analysis** 🌐, **USP Analysis** 🌐, **Core Competence Analysis** 🌐 and **SWOT Analysis** 🌐 to analyze their current situation. They think about how their industry is likely to evolve, and how their competitors are likely to behave. They look at how they can **innovate successfully** 🌐, and shape their businesses and their strategies to succeed in future marketplaces. And they test their visions with appropriate market research, and by assessing key risks using techniques such as **Scenario Analysis** 🌐.

Therefore, leadership is proactive – problem solving, looking ahead, and not being satisfied with things as they are.

Once they have developed their visions, leaders must make them compelling and convincing. A **compelling vision** 🌐 is one that people can **see, feel, understand, and embrace**. Effective leaders provide a rich picture of what the future will look like when their visions have been realized. They **tell inspiring stories** 🌐, and explain their visions in ways that everyone can relate to.

Here, leadership combines the analytical side of vision creation with the passion of shared values, creating something really meaningful to the people being led.

2. Motivating and Inspiring People

A compelling vision provides the foundation for leadership. But it's leaders' ability to motivate and inspire people that helps them deliver that vision.

For example, when you start a new project, you will probably have lots of enthusiasm for it, so it's often easy to win support for the project at the beginning. However, it can be difficult to find ways to keep your vision inspiring after the initial enthusiasm fades, especially if the team or organization needs to make significant changes in the way that they do things. Leaders recognize this, and they work hard throughout the project to connect their vision with people's individual needs, goals, and aspirations.

One of the key ways they do this is through **Expectancy Theory** 🌐. Effective leaders link together two different expectations:

1. The expectation that hard work leads to good results.
2. The expectation that good results lead to attractive rewards or incentives.

This motivates people to work hard to achieve success, because they expect to enjoy rewards – both intrinsic and extrinsic – as a result.

Other approaches include restating the vision in terms of the benefits it will bring to the team's customers, and taking frequent opportunities to communicate the vision in an attractive and engaging way.

What's particularly helpful here is where leaders have **expert power** 🌐. People admire and believe in these leaders because they are expert in what they do. They have credibility, and they've earned the right to ask people to listen to them and follow them. This makes it much easier for these leaders to motivate and inspire the people they lead.

Leaders can also motivate and influence people through their natural charisma and appeal, and through other **sources of power** 🌐, such as the power to pay bonuses or assign tasks to people. However, good leaders don't rely too much on these types of power to motivate and inspire others.

3. Managing Delivery of the Vision

This is the area of leadership that relates to **management** 🌐.

Leaders must ensure that the work needed to deliver the vision is properly managed – either by themselves, or by a dedicated manager or team of managers to whom the leader delegates this responsibility – and they need to ensure that their vision is delivered successfully.

To do this, team members need performance goals that are linked to the team's overall vision. Our article on **Performance Management and KPIs** 🌐 (Key Performance Indicators) explains one way of doing this, and our **Project Management** section explains another. And, for day-to-day management of delivering the vision, the **Management By Wandering Around** 🌐 (MBWA) approach helps to ensure that what should happen, really happens.

Leaders also need to make sure they **manage change** 🌐 effectively. This helps to ensure that the changes needed to deliver the vision are implemented smoothly and thoroughly, with the support and backing of the people affected.

4. Coaching and Building a Team to Achieve the Vision

Individual and team development are important activities carried out by transformational leaders. To develop a team, leaders must first understand team dynamics. Several well-established and popular models describe this, such as **Belbin's Team Roles** 🌐 approach, and Bruce Tuckman's **Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing theory** 🌐.

A leader will then ensure that team members have the necessary skills and abilities to do their job and achieve the vision. They do this by **giving and receiving feedback** 🌐 regularly, and by **training and coaching** 🌐 people to improve individual and team performance.

Leadership also includes looking for **leadership potential** 🌐 in others. By developing leadership skills within your team, you create an environment where you can continue success in the long term. And that's a true measure of great leadership.

Note:

The words "leader" and "leadership" are often used incorrectly to describe people who are actually managing. These individuals may be highly skilled, good at their jobs, and valuable to their organizations – but that just makes them excellent managers, not leaders.

So, be careful how you use the terms, and don't assume that people with "leader" in their job titles, people who describe themselves as "leaders," or even groups called "leadership teams," are actually creating and delivering transformational change.

A particular danger in these situations is that people or organizations that are being managed by such an individual or group think they're being led; but they're not. There may actually be no leadership at all, with no one setting a vision and no one being inspired. This can cause serious problems in the long term.

Key Points

Leadership can be hard to define and it means different things to different people.

In the transformational leadership model, leaders set direction and help themselves and others to do the right thing to move forward. To do this they create an inspiring vision, and then motivate and inspire others to reach that vision. They also manage delivery of the vision, either directly or indirectly, and build and coach their teams to make them ever stronger.

Effective leadership is about all of this – and it's exciting to be part of this journey!

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The New York Times

What Is a Hero?

By **Michael Gonchar** August 25, 2015 5:00 am

We often talk about soldiers, firefighters and fictional characters with supernatural powers as heroes. Recently, the news media have used the term to describe three Americans who helped foil an attack on a speeding train in Europe.

But what really is a hero? Does heroism always involve physical strength, or are there other qualities that define being a hero?

In “Americans Resist Hero Label After Foiling Train Attack,” Adam Nossiter writes:

PARIS — Looking awed by the sumptuous gilded surroundings of the United States ambassador’s residence here, the three young American men who thwarted an attack on a Paris-bound express train appeared at a news conference on Sunday, brushing aside suggestions that they were heroes.

Airman First Class Spencer Stone; Alek Skarlatos, a specialist in the Oregon National Guard; and Anthony Sadler, a friend of theirs, sat side by side, soberly recounting how a European vacation swiftly turned into something else. In their telling, the dramatic moments in the railway car could have been a particularly lively finish to an otherwise great night out: no heroics, and nothing dramatic about it.

Asked what had motivated him to confront a heavily armed man, Mr. Stone, his arm in a sling and one eye bruised from the struggle with the young Moroccan suspect, said simply, “To survive.”

There was no mistaking the gunman's determination, Mr. Stone said. "He seemed like he was ready to fight to the end, and so were we," he told reporters.

He was the first of the Americans to tackle the suspect, Ayoub El Khazzani, and he spoke first, blurting out the story as if he were eager to get it over with.

"I kind of woke up from the middle of a deep sleep," Mr. Stone said. "I turned around and I saw he had an AK-47 and it looked like" the weapon "wasn't working, and he was trying to charge his weapon, and Alek just hit on my shoulder and said, 'Let's go,'" Mr. Stone said. "And I went down, tackled him and put him on the ground, and Alek came up and grabbed the thing out of his hand."

But the trouble was not over. "It seemed like he just kept pulling more weapons," Mr. Stone said. Those included a box cutter with which he sliced up the young airman's hand.

The three held Mr. Khazzani and punched him until he fell unconscious. "The guy had a lot of ammo," Mr. Skarlatos said.

Right to the end of the brief encounter with reporters here, the men remained modest. "It was just, mostly, survival," Mr. Skarlatos said.

"Hiding and sitting back is not going to do anything," Mr. Sadler said.

Students: Read the entire article, then tell us ...

— What is a hero? What qualities do you look for in a hero? Does heroism always require physical strength, or can it be defined in other ways?

— Does heroism demand extraordinary circumstances, like a train attack or war? Or can heroism take place in our everyday lives? Can anyone be a hero?

— Do you think Spencer Stone, Alek Skarlatos and Anthony Sadler are heroes? Or are they right in resisting the label? Why?

— In a previous Student Opinion question, we asked students who were their heroes — and answers ranged from important leaders like the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to parents and baseball coaches. Who are *your* heroes? Why?

Students 13 and older are invited to comment below. All comments are moderated by Learning Network staff, but please keep in mind that once your comment is accepted, it will be made public.

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THE BLOG

What Is a Hero

07/08/2014 12:29 pm ET | **Updated** Sep 06, 2014

Rob Cipriano Founder, CEO, The AllHumanity Group & Redemption Film Partners

What is a hero? Who are the people we make heroes? Why do we need heroes? What happens when a hero falls? Why do we need heroes?

A hero is someone who "we" determine to have demonstrated behaviors and decisions that are ethically and emotionally worthy of our awe. We see in them something we think is not in us. Given similar conditions, we "think" we might not make the same moves and decisions they do, so we place them in an elevated place in society or in our minds. What is a hero? Someone who inspires us by their example. Someone who moves us emotionally to connect with them at some level in order for us develop a connection with them. We may want to idolize them or place them in high personal regard. We may want to connect with them in a personal way by focusing on them to garner their strength or will-power. We may also desire to possess them in order to gain hero status by way of a kindred association.

So, what is it specifically that a hero does that creates awe in us? What makes us pick one over another? What is it about our hero that makes us stand-up and take note and then admire, adore or try to emulate them? In many cases, it is their accomplishments. We have been granted access to their triumphant consummations of acts and deeds which, we believe, are beyond our own capacities. For example, a great football player achieves astounding record breaking feats, and we immediately determine that they possess a greatness, that we bestowed upon them. They are a god. They are superior in all ways due to the fact that they threw the ball further or ran faster than all before them. We develop awe and a form of respect for their accomplishments. Their achievements become the new "super hero" standard to measure against. What about Princess Diane, the people's princess? The world adored her in her rise from a rather simple country girl to a world recognized and cherished symbol of goodness. We connected with her, no matter who we were, because she connected with us in an awe inspiring way. Like a fairy tale, her journey to marry Prince Charles and become a Princess disclosed to us that it was indeed possible to live a fairy tale life. What did we garner from this example? That we connect with a hero because a hero connects with us. Even though they have done that which, we think, is beyond us, they connect with us. It would seem to be paradoxical, but for some reason, it is not.

What else does a hero do to attain our admiration? Many times, they overcome a tragedy or survive a horrendous calamity. A sickness or a heinous accident that would have desolated the average person, seems to have intensified the heroes determination and intrepidity. We gaze upon this person in absolute astonishment and want to reward them with our love and respect for their triumph over tragedy. Their actions tell us that it is possible to overcome whatever comes our way. They connect with us personally by surviving and thriving.

Since the beginning of time many of our heroes were warriors who over-powered those who would try to harm or take from us the things that we cherished. A strong defender of us as a society or culture gets hero status. Our great military soldiers who sacrifice everything to defend our borders, or cultures or our freedoms are indeed heroes to us. He or she places their very lives on the line in order that our way of life is protected from the influences or domination of others who wish to bring evil to us. Our armed forces are a classification of joint heroes. We automatically bestow heroic honors to those who fight for us. However, very often a single person will emerge from the joint heroes to be elevated to hero. He or she has demonstrated such courage and honor that they grab the attention of a grateful society. We call them hero and we are compelled to connect with them. Many times, this hero does not understand why they are being exalted merely for doing what they believed and thought was correct and right. They did not think at the moments or during the episode, "if I do this, I will be loved and adored forever". They simply did what was in them. They placed other people's wellbeing before and above their own. Thank God above for this hero, because our freedoms are dependent upon these few.

We have seen many heroes emerge over the past centuries. These people show us that there are indeed choices involved in the process of living a respectable life. Recently, we watched a pilot, Sully Sullenberger, land a U.S. Airways flight in the Hudson River in New York City that was disabled after hitting a flock of Canadian geese. He was called a national hero after all 155 of the passengers and crew survived. What choices did he make at that moment that resulted in such a joyful end to what could have been a disaster? He decided and made the personal choice to place every single person's life on that plane at the highest regard. He elected to also protect the tens of thousands of lives that may have perished if the flight had crashed into midtown Manhattan. He did what needed to be done when it needed to be done without even an inch of doubt. I am sure Sully did not think about the press conference later that afternoon.

Still yet another type of hero as emerged. The passengers on Flight 13 in PA on 911 decided to take action in the face of an inevitable ending, and take over the terrorist who were evil-bend upon death and destruction. Where did these men and women gather their strength to do this remarkably brave thing? I would suggest, that they gathered unity courage. They looked into each other's eyes and "connected" with each other. They saw in themselves an uncommon valor through a banded bravery. In the end "we" saw them as modern day heroes ...

What have we learned so far? There are different types of heroes. Heroes that, by example show us that anything is possible. Heroes that by their decisions, demonstrate a courage that is not common in the average populace and we see a hero that finds strength to overcome adversity and thrive. We have seen heroes that connect and unify when their unification is needed to stop or to mitigate the amount of death and destruction that is blatantly obvious to occur.

I have witnessed in recent months a little girl named Angelina who has and still to this very minute, demonstrate's such courage and heroic strength while she fights a vicious cancer. She is only ten years old and her will to "push through" and, to be an example of strength and the "right stuff" has personally connected with me. As I fight my battle to live, I connect with her. So, being a hero is about connecting with people. It is about being connected with and connecting with others, most of whom, we never meet. It is about placing the safety, health, welfare and protection of others first and foremost in your decision, or better yet, a hero is one that does not make the decision but rather just acts in protection of people.

Heroes come in many ages shapes and sizes. Many of our heroes are everyday folks like you and me. It is the mother who chooses to stand up and protect her children with courage and inner strength when the cards are stack against her. She works around the clock to provide for their health growth and protection. When her pain is so agonizing that she can't walk another step, she gathers yet more strength in order that the children are well.

There is the hero child who stands up for a disabled child in a play ground and does not permit the challenged wee one to be hurt. There is the school bus driver who protects their children passengers against any invader. There is the father who faces an invader into a home and places his life before all. There is parent who adopts a child who has been abused and patiently holds their hand as they navigate childhood. There is the mother or father of a veteran who's taken his or her own life who finds the strength to help other parents who face similar tragedies.

Each of these heroes and many more garner from within themselves the unimaginable fortitude to change the lives of other with absolute sacrifice and unmitigated determination.

I have been blessed to witness such heroism time after time in my life. I have seen how people respond to heroes and also seen how heroes have been attacked. What makes some people attack a hero? What brings out rage in certain people against our heroes?

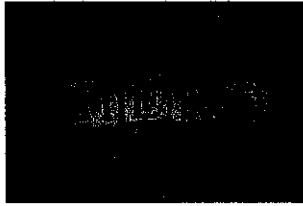
I would conclude that when certain individuals are faced with the heroic act of others they might generate a fierce furnace of hatred because they have not yet demonstrated within themselves a similar response. They, without self awareness, project outward their own feeling of incapability of responding heroically. The hate is so severe that it spills out towards the hero and is filled with spitting venom. A disturbing portion of our society has morphed from a culture of raising up our extraordinary to a society/culture of bringing them down. The thought is "I can't be like him or her, so they must not be for real ... or ... they are hiding something". The thought process is that we are all lost and useless and so the one who stands out must be a fake. This is a sad commentary of where some of our culture has landed.

I know a man who demonstrated such heroic deeds his entire life. He literally has saved tens of thousands of lives with his humanitarian work. A few years back he was attacked viciously by a helpless hidden diabolical and reprehensible man who sought nothing more than attention for his attacking of my friend. It seemed unreal that someone so noble could be bombarded so relentlessly with such deception and slander. As the years passed, I understood more about the nature of the attack and the attacker.

It is a shame that some people find that their only recognition in life is a narcissistic attack upon others whose purpose it to provide relief, aid and help for those in need. Since, the true hero, as we learned earlier, does not set out to be recognized, nor do they seek adoration for their actions, the attacks may seem bizarre at best. Forgiveness seems to be the first line of action by the hero, which, by perfect chance, it already built into their DNA.

I will continue to write more on our heroes in hopes that we return as a society to a place where we hold them high and learn how to, ourselves morph into a humanityhero — AllHumanity!

What Really is a Hero, Anyway?



As we all hear the word “hero” used from time to time, have you ever asked yourself the question, “What is a hero, anyway?” I have asked that question many times. As I inquired into this more, and have spoken to many people about this, others also came up for me:

- Is a hero someone we simply admire, respect, look up to?
- Is a hero some kind of “superhero” with “super powers?”
- Does it take a lot of money and fame to be a hero?
- When I show courage, does that make me a hero?
- What’s involved in being a hero?
- Can we call ourselves a hero?
- Why do we have such a weird relationship to the word “hero?”

You may have asked yourself these same questions. So, let’s start now by looking at the concept of “hero” and “heroism.”

While there are many interpretations of what a hero is, I have adopted the definition used by the Heroic Imagination Project:

Heroes are people who transform compassion (a personal virtue) into heroic action (a civic virtue). In doing so, they put their best selves forward in service to humanity. A hero is as an individual or a network of people that take action on behalf of others in need, or in defense of integrity or a moral cause.

Heroic action is:

- **Engaged in voluntarily;**
- **Conducted in service to one or more people or the community as a whole;**
- **Involving a risk to physical comfort, social stature, or quality of life; and**
- **Initiated without the expectation of material gain.**

When you consider this interpretation, you can really get that heroism is the other side of the coin — the opposite — of bystander behavior. When you voluntarily engage in an activity that is in service to someone else, or the community as a whole, and you show courage by taking a risk AND do it without any expectation of material gain: you are a hero! You are not a bystander.

Heroism is not random acts of kindness, as great as they are. Heroism is very distinct. A hero is not someone you simply admire or respect. A hero is a very distinct person.

Who needs a hero?

Each and every day around us, there are those who need a hero:

- If a child is being bullied at school — or even an adult being bullied at the workplace — they need a hero.
- If someone has had too much to drink and they are about to drive, they — and everyone that their driving may impact — need a hero.
- If someone is being sexually “hit on” and has not given consent, they need a hero.

- If a group of students are being hazed — physically, emotionally or otherwise — they need a hero.
- If an inappropriate or offensive comment is spoken, those impacted need a hero.

Who wants to be a hero?

Now, truth be told, we all want to be heroes. We all want to show courage and make *that* difference in *that* moment of time that will dramatically impact the situation and even foster change. Keep someone safe. Keep others safe. Stand up for what is right and just. As I travel the country and speak to audiences of hundreds of people — and then have the chance to speak one-on-one with many of them — I have yet to meet anyone that doesn't want this. We all simply desire the ability and the power to act freely and without restraint to make this kind of difference. To show courage.

Yes, I know, we all have a really funky relationship to the word "hero." You may notice that it came up for you the second you read the headline to this post. You may think it's narcissistic. Egotistical. Self-promotional. You may even think that it's something to be bestowed on you rather than self-acclamation.

I also believe that most of us have a very cynical and resigned relationship to heroism. It may come from a time when we tried to be a hero — to take a heroic action — and it didn't go well or have the effect we needed it to. Or, maybe we wanted to be a hero for someone and never took the actions necessary to make *the* difference. In those moments we make a decision that we can't be a hero — we don't have what it takes. It was a good idea at the time; however, "I must not be good enough to be a hero." And these decisions have been validated by subsequent events ever since we made

them. Actually, the older we are, the more evidence we have gathered to prove them true.

I get it. I really do. I have just as much evidence as you do that I am not a hero — and can't be. "Why even try, right?"

I am on this journey with you and I invite us all to stay in this conversation and explore it together: "How can I be a hero?" Better yet, "how can I prepare and equip myself to show courage and be a hero in those moments in life that demand it?"

I am committed that we all create a new and inspiring relationship to being a hero and allowing others to be heroes for us. Let yourself be empowered by the opportunity it is to make this kind of difference. This very commitment is the driving force of this movement.

Think of a time someone was a hero for you and how you have never forgotten that person for what they did. You have never gotten over their courage and their actions — *for you.*

Think of a time when you were able to make this kind of difference for someone else. What did it feel like? What was that experience like? I promise, if you allow yourself to really experience this, you will be inspired — *by yourself!*

A hero or a bystander

My challenge to all of us: **be a hero vs. be a bystander!**

Be an everyday person willing to keep your eyes, ears and heart open every day to any opportunity that may demand heroism.

I invite you now to commit to this by taking the pledge in the box on the right side of this page.

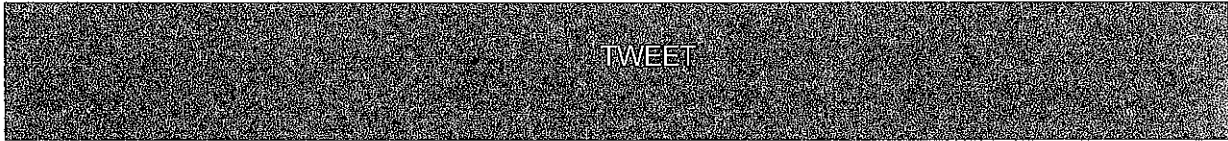
I thank you for taking this on. Really! I thank you for being the kind of person even willing to make this kind of commitment and hold yourself accountable for fulfilling it — for others, for organizations, and for issues you care about.

This will allow all of us to live extraordinary lives making *the* difference we all want — and need — to make.

What Makes A Hero

Why most of our heroes aren't really heroic

Posted Sep 19, 2010



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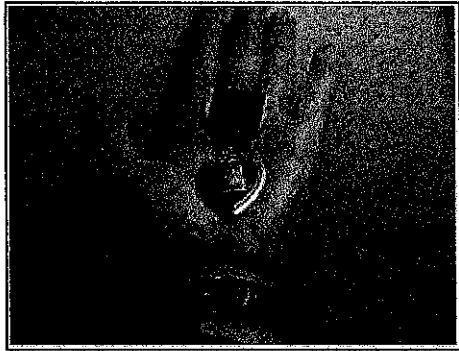


Photo: nordique

Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/nordique/141172804/>

I saw a patient of mine recently whose appearance in my office always makes me smile. He's challenging—not because he's a difficult person (quite the opposite), but because he has so many serious medical problems about which I can do so little. Why, then, does seeing him so consistently lighten my mood? Because it reminds me that for all the terrible things that go on—the abuse, the discrimination, the injustice, the downright nastiness—good still exists in the world. Because, you see, he's a hero.

What makes him a hero isn't the consistent good cheer with which he faces the discomfort his illnesses cause him on a daily basis. What makes him a hero is that fifteen years ago, before he got sick, he donated one of his kidneys to his brother who had AIDS. He told me about it the first day we met when he came to see me, reporting it the same way he did that he lived alone and worked at a large retail chain—in a tone that attached to it no particular significance. Whatever ego boost he may or may not have ever felt from doing it had long since faded. I paused in my history taking, looked up at him from the notes I was making with eyebrows raised as I, at least, thought this remarkable. But in response, he only smiled self-consciously and nodded once to confirm it.

Around the same time, a professional football player (whose name I can't recall now) was being promoted by the media as a hero, and I remember thinking how strange it was that the entire nation was celebrating him when only a handful of people knew about my patient.

A HERO DEFINED

Not to take away from that football player's accomplishments in any way—I'm a great admirer of excellence in any form—but I found nothing about him even remotely heroic. I wondered if he was ever introduced to my patient if he wouldn't find the label a bit embarrassing himself.

What actually makes a hero? I'd argue it's the willingness to make a personal sacrifice for the benefit of others. If you don't find yourself having to resist a voice inside your head urging you to save yourself instead of whatever action you're contemplating, my heart, at least, will refuse to recognize your actions—however legitimately compassionate or courageous they may be—as heroic. Serving others while simultaneously serving oneself can be noble, certainly, but a special kind of nobility attaches itself to those who serve others at a cost to themselves. *That's* the nobility that tugs at my heart. *That's* the the kind of behavior I find heroic.

WHO QUALIFIES?

This definition implies the number of genuine heroes we have is at once smaller and larger than we all think. Smaller, because many of those people held up by the media as heroes, while undoubtedly wonderful in many ways, don't qualify as heroes. Certainly not famous sports figures—even those who quietly provide free game tickets to underprivileged children as Michael Jordan did or volunteer their time and money to charity as numerous pro football players do.

In fact, what sparked my thinking about this topic was a Facebook posting by a friend of mine who wrote, "...on a plane talking to an interesting passenger before take off about his job...will be an interesting flight sitting next to American hero Captain Sullivan..." I

found myself reflecting that while Sully does indeed for me represent the epitome of excellence, commitment, humility, and grace under pressure, the actions he took in the particular circumstance that made him famous weren't, in my view, heroic. Strictly speaking, he risked losing nothing personal in what he did on that day he and his crew (let's not forget his crew) saved the lives of all the passengers of Flight 1549. He may have been thinking more about his passengers' safety than his own—a characteristic of heroes to be sure—and, in fact, I strongly suspect that had circumstances been different and he'd needed to put himself in personal jeopardy to save those passengers, he would have had done so without hesitation. But those circumstances didn't exist the day he glided that plane safely into the Hudson. He had to make many choices but none that put him in more jeopardy than anyone else. While it seems to me likely that he does, in fact, possess the character of a hero, on that particular day no opportunity presented itself for him to display it. Leadership, courage, decisiveness, and technical expertise—yes. But heroism—no.

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And I think he'd agree. Few people consider themselves heroes when doing something they have no choice about doing. This includes, I've discovered, most patients who find themselves facing potentially terminal diseases like cancer. Most such patients, in fact, bristle at the notion that "fighting" their disease makes them heroic. They certainly don't feel like heroes, they tell me. How they feel is tired, discouraged, and sick. They do what they need to do to survive. What's heroic, they want to know, about that? There's no other person whom they hope to save by fighting, no personal sacrifice they're making that another may live. They "fight" to save themselves—a worthy and noble goal certainly, one that requires enormous courage in the face of the painful treatments they must often endure—but not a goal, most of them seem to feel, that in any way deserves to be called heroic. Most of them even refuse to see the keeping of a stiff upper lip in the face of their fear as heroic, even when it's done—as it so often is—in an attempt to ease the burden their loved ones feel in watching them go through their illness.

So how, then, using this definition, are there *more* heroes around than we think? To find the answer, look at your neighbors and friends. You'll often find, if you bother to ask,

that they're making sacrifices for others—sometimes enormous ones—all around you. Single mothers who deny themselves vacations, clothes, and even food to send their children to college. Couples who come to their doctors with forms to be filled out to qualify them to become foster parents. Children who put their careers on hold or even abandon them altogether to care for their sick parents, or to keep them out of nursing homes.

And my patient, who donated a kidney to save his brother. A brother who unfortunately died anyway (this was back when most AIDS patients died no matter what we did—a fact my patient knew himself when he gave him his kidney).

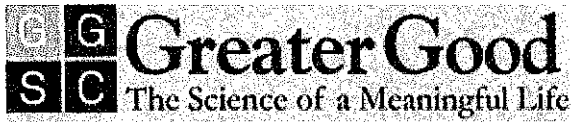
"That's how it goes sometimes," was all he said to me when I asked him about his brother's death during that first visit we had all those years ago.

He'd come to see me, by the way, because his one remaining kidney had started to fail. I subsequently diagnosed him with sarcoidosis and was able to save it, only to flounder at sparing him from further complications of the disease later, complications that have since forced him to go on disability and significantly compromised the quality of his life.

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I'm sure he feels bitter about it on some days and rails against his fate on others. He never complains to me about it, though.

He's one of my heroes. Who are some of yours?



What Makes a Hero?

By Philip Zimbardo | January 18, 2011 | 6 Comments

We all have an inner hero, argues **Philip Zimbardo**. Here's how to find it.

This month, Greater Good features videos of a presentation by Philip Zimbardo, the world-renowned psychologist perhaps best known for his infamous Stanford Prison Experiment. In his talk, Zimbardo discusses the psychology of evil and of heroism, exploring why good people sometimes turn bad and how we can encourage more people to perform heroic acts. In this excerpt from his talk, he zeroes in on his research and educational program designed to foster the "heroic imagination."

What makes us good? What makes us evil?

Research has uncovered many answers to the second question: Evil can be fostered by dehumanization, diffusion of responsibility, obedience to authority, unjust systems, group pressure, moral disengagement, and anonymity, to name a few.

But when we ask why people become heroic, research doesn't yet have an answer. It could be that heroes have more compassion or empathy; maybe there's a hero gene; maybe it's because of their levels of oxytocin—research by neuroeconomist Paul Zak has shown that this "love hormone" in the brain increases the likelihood you'll demonstrate altruism. We don't know for sure.

I believe that heroism is different than altruism and compassion. For the last five years, my colleagues and I have been exploring the nature and roots of heroism, studying exemplary cases of heroism and surveying thousands of people about their choices to act (or not act) heroically. In that time, we've come to define heroism as an activity with several parts.

First, it's performed in service to others in need—whether that's a person, group, or community—or in defense of certain ideals. Second, it's engaged in voluntarily, even in military contexts, as heroism remains an act that goes beyond something required by military duty. Third, a heroic act is one performed with recognition of possible risks and costs, be they to one's physical health or personal reputation, in which the actor is willing to accept anticipated sacrifice. Finally, it is performed without external gain anticipated at the time of the act.

Simply put, then, the key to heroism is a concern for other people in need—a concern to defend a moral cause, knowing there is a personal risk, done without expectation of reward.

More on Heroism

Watch the video of Philip Zimbardo's *Greater Good* talk on heroism.

Read his essay on "The Banality of Heroism," which further explores the conditions that can promote heroism vs. evil.

Read this *Greater Good* essay on the "psychology of the bystander."

Learn more about Zimbardo's Heroic Imagination Project.

By that definition, then, altruism is heroism light—it doesn't always involve a serious risk. Compassion is a virtue that may lead to heroism, but we don't know that it does. We're just now starting to scientifically distinguish heroism from these other concepts and zero in on what makes a hero.

My work on heroism follows 35 years of research in which I studied the psychology of evil, including my work on the infamous Stanford Prison Experiment. The two lines of research aren't as different as they might seem; they're actually two sides of the same coin.

A key insight from research on heroism so far is that the very same situations that inflame the hostile imagination in some people, making them villains, can also instill the heroic imagination in other people, prompting them to perform heroic deeds.

Take the Holocaust. Christians who helped Jews were in the same situation as other civilians who helped imprison or kill Jews, or ignored their suffering. The situation provided the impetus to act heroically or malevolently. Why did some people choose one path or the other?

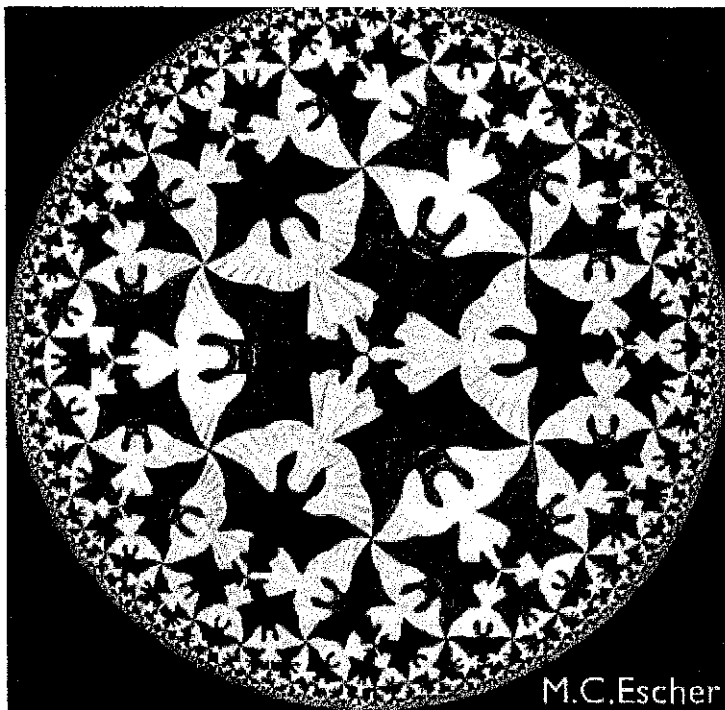
Another key insight from my research has been that there's no clear line between good and evil. Instead, the line is permeable; people can cross back and forth between it.

This is an idea wonderfully represented in an illusion by M. C. Escher, at left. When you squint and focus on the white as the figures and the black as the background, you see a world full of angels and tutus dancing around happily. But now focus on the black as the figures and the white as the background: Now it's a world full of demons.

What Escher's telling us is that the world is filled with angels and devils, goodness and badness, and these dark and light aspects of human nature are our basic yin and yang. That is, we all are born with the capacity to be anything. Because of our incredible brains, anything that is imaginable becomes possible, anything that becomes possible can get transformed into action, for better or for worse.

Some people argue humans are born good or born bad; I think that's nonsense. We are all born with this tremendous capacity to be anything, and we get shaped by our circumstances—by the family or the culture or the time period in which we happen to grow up, which are accidents of birth; whether we grow up in a war zone versus peace; if we grow up in poverty rather than prosperity.

George Bernard Shaw captured this point in the preface to his great play "Major Barbara": "Every reasonable man and woman is a potential scoundrel and a potential good citizen. What a man is depends upon his character what's inside. What he does and what we think of what he does depends on upon his circumstances."



So each of us may possess the capacity to do terrible things. But we also possess an inner hero; if stirred to action, that inner hero is capable of performing tremendous goodness for others.

Another conclusion from my research is that few people do evil and fewer act heroically. Between these extremes in the bell curve of humanity are the masses—the general population who do nothing, who I call the “reluctant heroes”—those who refuse the call to action and, by doing nothing, often implicitly support the perpetrators of evil.

So on this bell curve of humanity, villains and heroes are the outliers. The reluctant heroes are the rest. What we need to discover is how to give a call to service to this general population. How do we make them aware of the evil that exists? How do we prevent them from getting seduced to the dark side?

We don't yet have a recipe for creating heroes, but we have some clues, based on the stories of some inspiring heroes.

I love the story of a wonderful nine-year-old Chinese boy, who I call a dutiful hero. In 2008, there was a massive earthquake in China's Szechuan province. The ceiling fell down on a school, killing almost all the kids in it. This kid escaped, and as he was running away he noticed two other kids struggling to get out. He ran back and saved them. He was later asked, “Why did you



do that?" He replied, "I was the hall monitor! It was my duty, it was my job to look after my classmates!"

This perfectly illustrates what I call the "heroic imagination," a focus on one's duty to help and protect others. For him, it was cultivated by being assigned this role of

hall monitor.

Another story: Irena Sendler was a Polish hero, a Catholic woman who saved at least 2,500 Jewish kids who were holed up in the Warsaw ghetto that the Nazis had erected. She was able to convince the parents of these kids to allow her to smuggle them out of the ghetto to safety. To do this, she organized a network.

That is a key principle of heroism: Heroes are most effective not alone but in a network. It's through forming a network that people have the resources to bring their heroic impulses to life.

What these stories suggest is that every one of us can be a hero. Through my work on heroism, I've become even more convinced that acts of heroism don't just arrive from truly exceptional people but from people placed in the right circumstance, given the necessary tools to transform compassion into heroic action.

Building on these insights, I have helped to start a program designed to learn more of heroism and to create the heroes of tomorrow.

The Heroic Imagination Project (HIP) is amplifying the voice of the world's quiet heroes, using research and education networks to promote a heroic imagination in everyone, and then empower ordinary people of all ages and nations to engage in extraordinary acts of heroism. We want to democratize the notion of heroism, to emphasize that most heroes are ordinary people; it's the act that's extraordinary.

There are already a lot of great heroes projects out there, such as the Giraffe Heroes Project. The HIP is unique in that it's the only one encouraging research into heroism, because there's very little.

Here are a few key insights from research we've done surveying 4,000 Americans from across the country. Each of these statements is valid after controlling for all demographic variables, such as education and socioeconomic status.

Heroes surround us. One in five—20 percent—qualify as heroes, based on the definition of heroism I provide above. Seventy-two percent report helping another person in a dangerous emergency. Sixteen percent report whistle blowing on an injustice. Six percent report sacrificing for a non-relative or stranger. Fifteen percent report defying an unjust authority. And not one of these people has been formally recognized as a hero.

Opportunity matters. Most acts of heroism occur in urban areas, where there are more people and more people in need. You're not going to be a hero if you live in the suburbs. No shit happens in the suburbs!

Education matters. The more educated you are, the more likely you are to be a hero, I think because you are more aware of situations.

Volunteering matters. One third of all the sample who were heroes also had volunteered significantly, up to 59 hours a week.

Gender matters. Males reported performing acts of heroism more than females. I think this is because women tend not to regard a lot of their heroic actions as heroic. It's just what they think they're supposed to do for their family or a friend.

Race matters. Blacks were eight times more likely than whites to qualify as heroes. We think that's in part due to the rate of opportunity. (In our next survey, we're going to track responses by area code to see if in fact these heroes are coming from inner cities.

Personal history matters. Having survived a disaster or personal trauma makes you three times more likely to be a hero and a volunteer.

Based on these insights into heroism, we've put together a toolkit for potential heroes, especially young heroes in training, who already have opportunities to act heroically when they're kids, such as by opposing bullying.

A first step is to take the "hero pledge," a public declaration on our website that says you're willing to be a hero in waiting. It's a pledge "to act when confronted with a situation where I feel something is wrong," "to develop my heroic abilities," and "to believe in the heroic capacities within myself and others, so I can build and refine them."

You can also take our four-week "Hero Challenge" mini-course online to help you develop your heroic muscles. The challenge may not require you to do anything heroic, but it's training you to be heroic. And we offer more rigorous, research-based education and training programs for middle and high schools, corporations, and the military that make people aware of the social factors that produce passivity, inspire them to take positive civic action, and encourage the skills needed to consistently translate heroic impulses into action.

We're also in the process of creating an Encyclopedia of Heroes, a collection of hero stories from all over the world. Not just all the classic ones and fictional ones, but ones that people from around the world are going to send in, so they can nominate ordinary heroes with a picture and a story. It will be searchable, so you can find heroes by age, gender, city and country. These are the unsung, quiet heroes—they do their own thing, put themselves in danger, defend a moral cause, help someone in need. And we want to highlight them. We want them to be inspirational to other people just like them.

Essentially, we're trying to build the social habits of heroes, to build a focus on the other, shifting away from the "me" and toward the "we." As the poet John Donne wrote: "No man [or woman]

is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; ... any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

So every person is part of humanity. Each person's pulse is part of humanity's heartbeat. Heroes circulate the life force of goodness in our veins. And what the world needs now is more heroes—you. It's time to take action against evil.



Greater Good wants to know:

Do you think this article will influence your opinions or behavior?



Very Likely



Likely



Unlikely



Very Unlikely



Not sure

About The Author

Philip Zimbardo, Ph.D., is a professor emeritus of psychology at Stanford University, a professor at Palo Alto University, a two-time past president of the Western Psychological Association, and a past president of the American Psychological Association. He is also the author of the best-selling book *The Lucifer Effect* and the president of the Heroic Imagination Project.

RADICALS & VISIONARIES

22 Qualities That Make a Great Leader



ADAM AND JORDAN BORNSTEIN

MARCH 22, 2016

This story appears in the March 2016 issue of *Entrepreneur*. [Subscribe >>](#)

1. Focus

“It’s been said that leadership is making important but unpopular decisions. That’s certainly a partial truth, but I think it underscores the importance of focus. To be a good leader, you cannot major in minor things, and you must be less distracted than your competitors. To get the few critical things done, you must develop incredible selective ignorance. Otherwise, the trivial will drown you.”

—*Tim Ferriss, bestselling author, host of The Tim Ferriss Show*

2. Confidence

“A leader instills confidence and ‘followership’ by having a clear vision, showing empathy and being a strong coach. As a female leader, to be recognized I feel I have to show up with swagger and assertiveness, yet always try to maintain my Southern upbringing which underscores kindness and generosity. The two work well together in gaining respect.”

—*Barri Rafferty, CEO, Ketchum North America*

3. Transparency

“I’ve never bought into the concept of ‘wearing the mask.’ As a leader, the only way I know how to engender trust and buy-in from my team and with my colleagues is to be 100 percent authentically me—open, sometimes flawed, but always passionate about our work. This has allowed me the freedom to be fully present and consistent. They know what they’re getting at all times. No surprises.”

—*Keri Potts, senior director of public relations, ESPN*

4. Integrity

“Our employees are a direct reflection of the values we embody as leaders. If we’re playing from a reactive and obsolete playbook, we’re needing to be right instead of doing what’s right, then we limit the full potential of our business and lose quality talent. If you focus on becoming authentic in all your interactions, that will rub off on your business and your culture, and the rest takes care of itself.”

—*Gunnar Lovelace, co-CEO and cofounder, Thrive Market*

5. Inspiration

“People always say I’m a self-made man. But there is no such thing. Leaders aren’t self-made; they are driven. I arrived in America with no money or any belongings besides my gym bag, but I can’t say I came with nothing: Others gave me great inspiration and fantastic advice, and I was fueled by my beliefs and an internal drive and passion. That’s why I’m always willing to offer motivation—to first-time entrepreneurs on Reddit. I know the power of inspiration, and if someone can stand on my shoulders to achieve greatness, I’m more than willing to help them up.”

—Arnold Schwarzenegger, former governor of California

6. Passion

“You must love what you do. In order to be truly successful at something, you must obsess over it and let it consume you. No matter how successful your business might become, you are never satisfied and constantly push to do something bigger, better and greater. Why? By example not because you feel like it’s what you should do, but because it is your way of life.”

—Joe Perez, cofounder, Tastemade

7. Innovation

“In any system with finite resources and infinite expansion of population—like your business, or like all of humanity—innovation is essential for not only success but also survival. The innovators are our leaders. You cannot separate the two. Whether it is by thought or technology or organization, innovation is our only hope to solve our challenges.”

—Aubrey Marcus, founder, Onnit

8. Patience

“Patience is really courage that’s meant to test your commitment to your cause. The path to great things is always tough, but the leaders understand when to abandon the cause and when to stay the course. If your vision is bold enough, there will be hundreds of reasons why it ‘can’t be done’ and plenty of doubters. A lot of things have to come together—external markets, competition, financial consumer demand and always a little luck—to pull off something big.”

—Dan Brian, COO, WhipClip

9. Stoicism

“It’s inevitable: We’re going to find ourselves in some real shit situations, whether they’re costly mistakes, unexpected failures or unscrupulous enemies. Stoicism is, at its core, accepting and anticipating this in advance, so that you don’t freak out, react emotionally and aggravate things further. Train our minds, consider the worst-case scenarios and regulate our unhelpful instinctual response that’s how we make sure shit situations don’t turn into fatal resolutions.”

—Ryan Holiday, author of *The Obstacle is the Way* and former director of marketing, American Apparel

10. Wonkiness

“Understanding the underlying numbers is the best thing I’ve done for my business. As we have a subscription-based service, the impact on our bottom line was to decrease our churn rate. Being able to nudge that number from 6 percent to 4 percent meant a 50 percent increase in the average customer’s lifetime value.

We would not have known to focus on this metric without being able to accurately analyze our data.”

—Sol Orwell, cofounder, Examine.com

11. Authenticity

“It’s true that imitation is one of the greatest forms of flattery, but not when it comes to leadership—and every great leader in mind from Mike Tomlin to Olympic ski coach Scott Rawles, led from a place of authenticity. Learn from others, read autobiographies of favorite leaders, pick up skills along the way... but never lose your authentic voice, opinions and, ultimately, how you make decisions.”

—Jeremy Bloom, cofounder and CEO, Integrate

12. Open-mindedness

“One of the biggest myths is that good business leaders are great visionaries with dogged determination to stick to their goals no matter what. It’s nonsense. The truth is, leaders need to keep an open mind while being flexible, and adjust if necessary. When in the sta-

phase of a company, planning is highly overrated and goals are not static. Your commitment should be to invest, develop and maintain great relationships.”

—Daymond John, CEO, Shark Branding and FUBU

13. Decisiveness

“In high school and college, to pick up extra cash I would often referee recreational basketball games. The mentor who taught me officiate gave his refs one important piece of advice that translates well into the professional world: ‘Make the call fast, make the call loud and don’t look back.’ In marginal situations, a decisively made wrong call will often lead to better long-term results and a stronger team than a wishy-washy decision that turns out to be right.”

—Scott Hoffman, owner, Folio Literary Management

14. Personableness

“We all provide something unique to this world, and we can all smell when someone isn’t being real. The more you focus on genuine connections with people, and look for ways to help them—rather than just focus on what they can do for you—the more likable a personable you become. This isn’t required to be a great leader, but it is to be a respected leader, which can make all the difference in your business.”

—Lewis Howes, New York Times bestselling author of *The School of Greatness*

15. Empowerment

“Many of my leadership philosophies were learned as an athlete. My most successful teams didn’t always have the most talent but they had teammates with the right combination of skills, strengths and a common trust in each other. To build an ‘overachieving’ team you need to delegate responsibility and authority. Giving away responsibilities isn’t always easy. It can actually be harder to do than completing the task yourself, but with the right project selection and support, delegating can pay off in dividends. It is how you trust people’s capabilities and get the most out of them.”

—Shannon Pappas, senior vice president, Beachbody LIVE

16. Positivity

“In order to achieve greatness, you must create a culture of optimism. There will be many ups and downs, but the prevalence of positivity will keep the company going. But be warned: This requires fearlessness. You have to truly believe in making the impossible possible.”

—Jason Harris, CEO, Mekanism

17. Generosity

“My main goal has always been to offer the best of myself. We all grow—as a collective whole—when I’m able to build up others and they in turn help them grow as individuals.”

—Christopher Perilli, CEO, Pixel Mobb

18. Persistence

“A great leader once told me, ‘persistence beats resistance.’ And after working at Facebook, Intel and Microsoft and starting my own company, I’ve learned two major lessons: All great things take time, and you must persist no matter what. That’s what it takes to be a great leader: willingness to go beyond where others will stop.”

—Noah Kagan, Chief Sumo, appsumo

19. Insightfulness

“It takes insight every day to be able to separate that which is really important from all the incoming fire. It’s like wisdom—it can be improved with time, if you’re paying attention, but it has to exist in your character. It’s inherent. When your insight is right, you

a genius. And when your insight is wrong, you look like an idiot.”

—Raj Bhakta, founder, WhistlePig Whiskey

20. Communication

“If people aren’t aware of your expectations, and they fall short, it’s really your fault for not expressing it to them. The people I work with are in constant communication, probably to a fault. But communication is a balancing act. You might have a specific want or need, but it’s superimportant to treat work as a collaboration. We always want people to tell us their thoughts and ideas—that’s why we have all these very talented people working with us.”

—Kim Kurlanchik Russen, partner, TAO Group

21. Accountability

“It’s a lot easier to assign blame than to hold yourself accountable. But if you want to know how to do it right, learn from financial advisor Larry Robbins. He wrote a genuinely humble letter to his investors about his bad judgment that caused their investments to falter, then opened up a new fund without management and performance fees—unheard of in the hedge fund world. This is character. That’s accountability. It’s not only taking responsibility; it’s taking the next step to make it right.”

—Sandra Carreon-John, senior vice president, M&C Saatchi Sport & Entertainment

22. Restlessness

“It takes real leadership to find the strengths within each person on your team and then be willing to look outside to plug the gaps. Don’t be the best to believe that your team alone does not have all the answers—because if you believe that, it usually means you’re not asking the right questions.”

—Nick Woolery, global director of marketing, Stance Socks

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