



THE 12 COMMANDMENTS OF LEADERSHIP

*“Our people deserve
nothing less than the most
spectacular leadership possible.”*

-Andrew DeMuth, Leading Blue

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12 Commandments of Leadership

1. **Care. You Must Care.**

Unquestionably the first commandment. Care about your people, the mission, the organization, but especially your people. If you don't care, don't become a leader. Seriously, don't do it.

2. **Understand the True Meaning of Leadership.**

Leadership is not a reward, rank, or benefit; it is a responsibility. It is about building teams and developing your people. It is never about personal gain or advancing your career. It is about them, not you. We define leadership as *the ability to get the best out of your people*. Be obsessed with building your people.

3. **Always Maintain a Leadership Mindset.**

Always look for leadership opportunities: opportunities to recognize, to develop, to train, to build. To sustain this on a regular basis, you must engage in self-care; you must keep your own batteries charged to be at *your* best. Be warned, though: ego is the antithesis of leadership. Read that last sentence again.

4. **Accomplish the Mission.**

Was the mission accomplished? Ultimately, this is the metric that matters, and it is how we measure the leader's success. As the leader, you are either effective or ineffective. Secure buy-in from your team, support the decisions from above (even when difficult), and execute.

5. **At all Times, Set the Example.**

Your people notice everything. Hypocrisy destroys trust, credibility, and respect. So does lying.

6. **Have the Greatest Onboarding Program on the Planet.**

Put the time into hiring. Then, into onboarding. Thoroughly indoctrinate new people into your culture. Spend time with them personally. Provide crystal clear expectations. Everyone should know exactly what is expected of them. Then, meet frequently with them to provide candid feedback.

7. **Own Every Mistake.**

Yes, it *was* your fault. The leader is ultimately responsible. You may delegate authority but never final responsibility; own it. Give credit generously. Take blame quickly.

8. **Be Passionate About the Three Pillars of Leadership.**

- A. **Create a bold vision.** Ideas are the powerhouse of great organizations. Work with your people as some of the best ideas will come from them.
- B. **Build a spectacular environment.** Non-negotiable: create an exceptional workplace for all and don't compromise. Relentlessly reinforce a **sense of purpose** in your people. Inspire them!
- C. **Develop a strong culture.** Culture is the electricity between your people. Control it. Do not allow toxicity or gossip or cancers. Develop a strong sense of shared purpose and pride. Preach positivity and get everyone on board with their obligation to contribute. Everyone must buy into contribution.

9. **Have Great Respect for the Vast Discipline of Communication, all Aspects of it.**

Radio silence in an organization kills morale. Understand what, when, why, and, how to communicate. Be truthful and respectful. And listen, not to reply, not to outwit, not to outdebate, but to understand.

10. **Notice Everything, Recognize Often, Appreciate Always.**

Great leaders notice effort, improvement, and performance. Notice the big things, but recognize excellence in small things too. Say thank you often! Show appreciation and be creative in recognition.

11. **Be Unapologetic About Standards and Expectations.**

Our standard is excellence, period. Everyone needs to fully understand and embrace this. Our expectations mirror our standards. Reinforce it relentlessly, "the highest of standards, the highest of expectations."

12. **Commit to Neverending Learning.**

Become a student of leadership: read, watch videos, attend training. Be consistent, even if it is just weekly. Understand there will never be a "Mission Accomplished!" moment with leadership development.