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Power Choices© July 2008

Power Choice – Self Leadership

Definitions from *The Free Dictionary* by Farlex.

Self: **1.** The total, essential, or particular being of a person; the individual: **2.** The essential qualities distinguishing one person from another; individuality: **3.** One's consciousness of one's own being or identity; the ego: **4.** One's own interests, welfare, or advantage

Leadership: **1.** The position or office of a leader: **2.** Capacity or ability to influence: **3.** Guidance; direction:

Is Self Leadership important?

Please consider the above definitions and consider the following questions. Is it important to become totally familiar with the total essence of a being that you spend virtually 24/7 with? Is it important to fully understand your interests, strengths, challenges, talents and limitations? Is it important to live a life and manage a career that helps you to become your personal best? If you have answered yes to any or all of these questions, than I believe that you know the answer to the question "*Is Self Leadership Important?*"

How to engage in successful Self Leadership?

Since each of us is a unique individual, our paths to **self leadership** will certainly look very different. First and foremost, the simplest way to engage in **self leadership** is to become acquainted with your self. Generally, life events cause us to stop short and take stock of what is important, what are we capable of accomplishing and the hurdles that we have to overcome. However, let me suggest, that rather than waiting for a crisis to arise – loss of job, relationship or a loved one; you take a proactive approach and find the way and means that interests and motivates you. Ultimately, you will become a person that offers strong, significant contributions in all aspects of your personal and professional life – that's **self leadership!**

**"He who knows
others is wise. He
who knows himself
is enlightened."**

Lao Tzu



**"The history of the
world is full of men who
rose to leadership, by
sheer force of self-
confidence, bravery and
tenacity."**

Mahatma Gandhi



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"I did it my way" Self Leadership

Laura Novakowski

***It matters not how strait the gait,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.***

from **Invictus**

by William Ernest Henley

The lyrics from a Frank Sinatra classic "***I did it my way***" ends with this line "*The record shows I took the blows and did it my way.*" These words certainly put **self leadership** in perspective for me. For each of us make our own choices – we live or die our lives with a certain style, certain behaviors and that is the best or the worst we can do.

I am privileged to spend time some time with a man what pretty much has done it "my way." This man clearly defined what was important to him in life – family, community and country. With hard work and simple planning, he never deviates from his path or his principles.

I was curious to know how he is and was able to accomplish so much with and in his life. His response, "*Life is quite simple. You treat people with respect and honesty. And, you treat yourself pretty much the same way.*"

He's a man of very few words. However, keep in mind that communication is only 7% verbal. Talk then really is very cheap. In his mind, "*If you give your word – you keep it.*" He has never had to say to me or to others, "*you have my word,*" because he simply kept it by getting the job done. If he quoted a price on a project – he's a retired contractor – and it cost him more – he ate the excess. His word, verbal and written was his bond. How about you? Are you willing to hold true to your word? Or do you pass on the cost, the blame, the excuses?

Prior to opening his own business, he was a foreman with a steel company. He led men by doing. If equipment broke, sometimes at the hand of a man, not a mechanical defect, he would fix the machine. Violating union rules. Yet, the job needed to get done. Deadlines and budgets mattered for all to keep their jobs. Unfortunately, too many people have forgotten what is best for all and worry about what's best for me. How about you?

When storms come, rivers rise, trees fall, power is out – he's there to lend a hand. Always ready to help a neighbor, a family member, a stranger. People often stop at his home on a rather isolated stretch of the road – his door is always open. His hands and back ready to help.

I know this man pretty well for you see he's my father. He taught me that to do it "my way" you conduct your life with honesty and integrity. You help someone when they are down and out. You see the job that needs to be done and you do it. You own up to your mistakes and learn. I'd like to believe that when all is said and done - "*I did it my way.*" That I "*took the blows*" and learned the lessons that shows similar, valuable **self leadership!**



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The Answer Is Within
Leanne Hoagland-Smith, M.S.

***One's real life is often the life that
one does not lead.***
Oscar Wilde

Mention the word leadership and a plethora of responses will happen. For leadership is a hot topic in the business and self improvement worlds.

Yet, talk about **self leadership** and eyebrows will raise. For **self leadership** is probably the most under utilized term and yet the most needed one.

In the book *Fail-Safe Leadership*, the authors quote Peter Drucker who said that "leadership is all about results." Yet to get results involves individuals who make good choices and tough decisions. These individuals must be able to lead themselves first and foremost before they can lead anyone else.

Consider switching the terms "people skills" or "soft skills" with **self leadership** skills. For when individuals demonstrate **self leadership** they are actively applying communication, time management, decision making, problem solving, productive thinking, collaboration and team building skill. All of these skills are soft in that specific hard skills such as knowledge or technical expertise are not involved and require working with other people to secure the desired results.

Years ago, our agrarian culture developed **self leadership** by the "*pull yourself up by your bootstrap*" mentality because there was no one else to count on for help. However with economy and culture changing from agrarian to a globally diverse one, the **self leadership** that was internally ingrained within society now has become an external part of society.

Given that **self leadership** begins within each person, then this leads to the obvious question: How do we as individuals develop **self leadership** skills? The answer to that question is just not one pact response. **Self leadership** development comes from many sources including parents and family members, friends, mentors, formal education, sports and personal actions. However the success of **self leadership** is up to each and every individual.

Here are a few suggestions to help improve your **self leadership** skills:

1. Commit to putting a plan together to develop those skills that you need to get to where you want to go.
2. Take action and put that plan to writing including flushing out all the goals necessary to secure the results that you desire.
3. Review the goals and the plan on a regular basis (weekly, if not bi-monthly).
4. Ask for feedback from those close to you to see if they notice any positive changes about you.
5. Find a mentor or a coach to help you by providing a different perspective

Successful **self leadership** does begin within each and every individual. Dr. Norman Vincent Peale is quoted as saying "Change Your Thoughts; Change Your World." You must believe that you are a leader and then take the actions necessary as that leader. The results will follow.



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Leading Yourself to Success

Stephen Sisselman

Question for the Month: *What personal successes have you had since January?*

Working in both a professional and private life can lead to many instances of leadership opportunities. Leadership opportunities are those that allow you to accomplish goals either for your family or your company. There is an area of leadership that is often left in the dark, and this is **self-leadership**. **Self-leadership** is accomplishing the goals that you create of your most amazing dreams and desires. In leadership roles across families and companies, there are always obstacles that stand in the way of reaching a goal; the same is true for **self-leadership**.

Start by taking a look back at your life thus far and make a list of your personal accomplishments, those goals you reached by yourself. Yes, it is true that other people are essential for our lives to be successful but for today, grant your self the opportunity to rejoice in your own successes. What did you do right? What kind of choices did you make? Write down all the things that come to mind that describe your state during this time of success.

Next, do a dream inventory. Write a list of all the things in this world you could possibly desire. Your list can be from World Peace to a new BMW. This is your list, so make sure its all about you. Take a few days with your list and see if anything else comes to mind. Look at your list and decide on one dream that you want to make a reality by creating a goal. Look to the past for clues on how to start your adventure.

Looking into success from the past can lead to future exponential success by focusing on our best skills. It is no doubt that there are times when goals must be achieved that have obstacles with solutions that require skills of less training or knowledge. Utilizing delegation can bring the skills of others to help achieve your own success. Giving the opportunity for success to other people through delegation leads to the accomplishments of goals with teamwork. It is the ultimate form of **self-leadership** as one can accomplish their needs through others while relieving some of the pressure of a constant one-man show. Allowing others help us succeed in our dreams whether it be the kids leaving there parents alone to better their relationship or the staff member who takes the extra initiative to work hard on a new project allows for healthy lives, success beyond our initial dreams and most importantly the understanding of how **self-leadership** can drive us to help ourselves reach into our vast pool of potential.

Make everyday a day to remember!
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Special Section

Laura and Leanne

Do you believe that you are a leader? **Self leadership** begins with understanding that each of us are leaders in our own right. Yet, many people fail to embrace the belief that they are leaders.

Take a few moments and list several individuals either living or dead whom you believe are leaders. Then write down their leadership skills, those skills that caused you to believe in their leadership ability.

Once you have completed this exercise take some time to reflect upon those skills. Do you have any of them? If so, then you too are a leader.

Are there some of leadership skills that you would like? Great! What are those specific skills? Write them down! Construct some goals to turn those thoughts into reality.

Everyone has certain strengths that allow him or her to secure the results from where they are now to where they want to go. Sometimes these strengths need to be reinforced while others need to be improved because they are not at a level of mastery.

As we wrote this month's newsletter, we once again realized that self leadership extends beyond specific skill sets. For if you do not know yourself, it is quite difficult to lead yourself. Remember the old quote: *"To thine own self be true."*

All of us need to take time for reflection. With time we can come to know our selves so that we can ultimately make good choices and tough decisions in our continued efforts to realize the results that lie within our dreams. This leads to the next question: What are your dreams?

The power of dreaming is an intangible part of **self leadership**. For without dreams, hopes and aspirations why would we want to grow forward, to change?

As we grow forward and learn more about who we are, we become better self leaders. And this **self leadership** growth allows us to reach further, travel farther than we had ever hope to imagine.

More Self Leadership Quotes

"A sense of humor is part of the art of leadership, of getting long with people, of getting things done."

Pres. Dwight D. Eisenhower

"Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves."

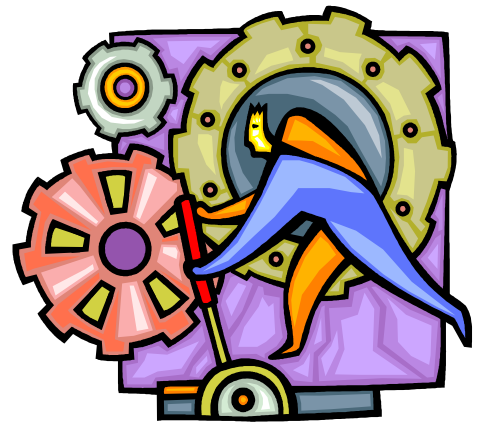
Carl Jung

"One of the hardest tasks of leadership is understanding that you are not what you are, but what you're perceived to be by others."

Edward L. Flom

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is not path and leave a trail."

Ralph Waldo Emerson



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