

ACTIVITY

Positive Leadership

The goal of this exercise is to start to think about what 'positive leadership' means to you, and in doing so, increase your leadership abilities.

Instructions

“Positive leadership” is a buzzword and can mean different things to different people. What we do know is that many organisations are going through changes, some with scarce resources which can lead to high workloads and stress. In such situations, organisations with employees who think positively and have a distinct advantage. Good leaders who are positive and have strong social relationships at work can move people from a normal trajectory to an extraordinary trajectory – they lead employees into a better future, a future where they can be the best they can be. They generally have an ideal vision that is long-term, challenging, and realistic. They are also good at aligning the organisation’s purpose and values with the values of each individual employee, and by propelling employees into a better future they avoid a ‘carrot and stick’ leadership style.

For this exercise we would like you to read through the following 50 leadership quotes and select three that represent the epitome of leadership for you.

- “A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don’t necessarily want to go, but ought to be.” – Rosalynn Carter
- “A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.” - Lao Tzu
- “It’s hard to lead a cavalry charge if you think you look funny on a horse.” - Adlai E. Stevenson II
- “Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers,

who can cut through argument, debate, and doubt to offer a solution everybody can understand.” – Colin Powell

- “The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant.” - Max DePree
- “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.” – John Quincy Adams
- “A leader is a dealer in hope.” - Napoleon Bonaparte
- “A leader...is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realizing that all along they are being directed from behind.” - Nelson Mandela
- “He who has never learned to obey cannot be a good commander.” - Aristotle
- “Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.” - Dwight D. Eisenhower
- “As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others.” – Bill Gates
- “A good leader is a person who takes a little more than his share of the blame and a little less than his share of the credit.” - John Maxwell
- “Become the kind of leader that people would follow voluntarily; even if you had no title or position.” - Brian Tracy
- “The leaders who offer blood, toil, tears and sweat always get more out of their followers than those who offer safety and a good time. When it comes

to the pinch, human beings are heroic.” – George Orwell

- “I start each day by telling myself what a positive influence I am on this world.” - Peter Daisyme
- “Earn your leadership every day.” - Michael Jordan
- “Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others.” – Jack Welch
- “Leadership is lifting a person’s vision to high sights, the raising of a person’s performance to a higher standard, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations.” - Peter Drucker
- “My job is not to be easy on people. My job is to take these great people we have and to push them and make them even better.” - Steve Jobs
- “The led must not be compelled. They must be able to choose their own leader.” – Albert Einstein
- “Great leaders find ways to connect with their people and help them fulfill their potential.” - Steven J. Stowell
- “To have long-term success as a coach or in any position of leadership, you have to be obsessed in some way.” - Pat Riley
- “If you think you are leading and turn around to see no one following, then you are just taking a walk.” – Benjamin Hooks
- “The challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; be kind, but not weak; be bold, but not bully; be thoughtful, but not lazy; be humble, but not timid; be proud, but not arrogant; have humor, but without folly.” - Jim Rohn

- “A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd.” - Max Lucado
- “To do great things is difficult; but to command great things is more difficult.” - Friedrich Nietzsche
- “It is absolutely necessary...for me to have persons that can think for me, as well as execute orders.” - George Washington
- “Leaders aren't born, they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work.” - Vince Lombardi
- “A cowardly leader is the most dangerous of men.” - Stephen King
- “A man always has two reasons for doing anything: a good reason and the real reason.” - J.P. Morgan
- “Not the cry, but the flight of a wild duck, leads the flock to fly and follow.” - Chinese Proverb
- “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” - Martin Luther King, Jr.
- “No man will make a great leader who wants to do it all himself, or to get all the credit for doing it.” - Andrew Carnegie
- “Average leaders raise the bar on themselves; good leaders raise the bar for others; great leaders inspire others to raise their own bar.” - Orrin Woodward
- “Those who try to lead the people can only do so by following the mob.” - Oscar Wilde
- “Outstanding leaders go out of their way to boost the self-esteem of their personnel. If people

believe in themselves, it's amazing what they can accomplish.” - Sam Walton

- “Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing.” - Albert Schweitzer
- “I am reminded how hollow the label of leadership sometimes is and how heroic followership can be.” - Warren Bennis
- “In this world a man must either be an anvil or hammer.” - Henry W. Longfellow
- “It is absurd that a man should rule others, who cannot rule himself. (Absurdum est ut alios regat, qui seipsum regere nescit.)” - Latin Proverb
- “A ruler should be slow to punish and swift to reward.” - Ovid
- “You don't have to hold a position in order to be a leader” - Henry Ford
- “Rely on your own strength of body and soul. Take for your star self-reliance, faith, honesty, and industry. Don't take too much advice — keep at the helm and steer your own ship, and remember that the great art of commanding is to take a fair share of the work. Fire above the mark you intend to hit. Energy, invincible determination with the right motive, are the levers that move the world.” - Noah Porter
- “Don't blow off another's candle for it won't make yours shine brighter.” Jaachynna N.E. Agu
- “I cannot give you the formula for success, but I can give you the formula for failure, which is: Try to please everybody.” - Herbert Swope
- “He who has learned how to obey will know how to

command.” - Solon

- “If one is lucky, a solitary fantasy can totally transform one million realities.” - Maya Angelou
- “The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint to keep from meddling with them while they do it.” - Theodore Roosevelt
- “Screw it, let's just do it.” - Richard Branson

Once you have chosen your three favourite quotes, print them out and put them up around or on your desk at work in order to create conversations around leadership and to remind yourself more regularly about good leadership.



Please type your chosen quotes below and print to display.

Background

Developing strong leadership skills takes effort and trial and error over a long period of time. The ability to lead well is increasingly sort after in today's rapidly changing business world, and cultivating these skills is a worthwhile investment.

Advice

Ask your colleagues and friends what aspects of leadership they see in you. Specifically, what behaviours have they noticed?

Suggested Readings

Dutton, J. E., & Spreitzer, G. M. (2014). *How to be a positive leader: Small actions, big impacts*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler. (HTBPL)



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Work on
Wellbeing

A small illustration of a person with a yellow head, purple shirt, and blue pants, sitting on top of a bar. This is a smaller version of the illustration seen at the top of the page.