



Servant Leadership

This Leadership Skill enables Leaders to:

- Understand the concept of servant leadership
- Understand the characteristics of a servant leader
- Understand the responsibilities of a servant leader
- Understand the effective application of the concepts of servant leadership

What is the relationship between a leader and the team? Many people's first reaction is to state that the team "works" for the leader, performing tasks for one person. When this happens, the leader isn't simply a leader, but more like a "boss" or an "owner." Many people don't want to be part of a team that works this way, and they'll only join them for the sake of external rewards, like a salary.

In a true team, the leader is one part of the team, and this role isn't necessarily any more important than the role of any other member. Being a team leader means accepting responsibility for the team, its members, its objectives, its reputation, its morale, and more. Being a team leader means serving the team. When a leader recognizes that he is responsible to the team, not the other way around, and acts accordingly, he becomes a "servant leader."

Servant leaders lead teams that people want to join. Servant leaders use a variety of leadership styles based upon the needs of the team and its objectives. A servant leader needs to enable the success of those led, remove barriers for them to the best of the leader's ability, and create an environment for the team to succeed. Many of the leadership examples you've seen in your lives aren't servant leaders, they're "bosses" and "commanders." These kinds of leaders are rarely chosen by a team's own membership to lead them but are imposed from outside. The modern workforce is making this kind of leadership less valuable. As people become more skilled and capable, they expect more respect for their actions and capabilities, more input into decisions, and more interactions with their leaders. They need more service.

In your lives today and in the future, you will have many opportunities to lead. If you accept the role of a servant leader, you'll find that teams will seek you out to lead them, your advice and opinion will be sought, and your team members will also grow and succeed.

Goal Directed Leadership



To be a servant leader to a high-performing team, you'll need to listen carefully: Be attuned to the people around you, and empathically understand what they're thinking. The servant leader knows his team's capabilities and desires. At the same time, servant leadership is more than just a consensual approach. Leaders need to lead - to set direction and lead team members in that direction. Sometimes they need to hold team members to account, to make tough decisions that some won't always like, and to encourage (push) people to excel. Sometimes, this is uncomfortable for the leader and for team members. If leaders don't do this, however, teams may become too "cozy"; they may lose their edge and start to fail in their tasks or in reaching their goals which is the real reason teams exist.

From a point/counterpoint perspective, servant leaders display the following traits:

Need to listen and know when the time for discussion is over.
Achieve consensus and know when to preserve things that are good without foundering in a constant storm of question and reinvention.
Set and maintain standards and know when to reject what does not maintain those standards or the team vision.
Serve their team members and know how to make a difference with the team.

All servant leaders also understand that they are not "in charge of", but rather are "responsible for".