

# BEST Leader in 30 Days!

The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership

## OVERVIEW

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## Overview

Hello and welcome to the OVERVIEW of *The BEST Leader in 30 Days!* My name is Sam Palazzolo, Principal Officer here at The Javelin Institute. So...

1. *What is it that leaders are doing when they are at their personal best?*
2. *In order to make extraordinary things happen, what exactly do they do?*

Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner (Authors of *The Leadership Challenge*) have been asking these questions since the mid-1980s, and similarly I have been asking leaders since 2008. The responses from leaders have been highly consistent, as well as illuminating! In analyzing the more than 10,000 interviews and case studies, as well as over 10 million leader survey responses from across the globe and from all kinds of organizations, industries, functions therein, levels within organizations, occupation types, respondent ages, as well as ethnicities, when leaders are doing their personal best, they:

- Model the Way
- Inspire a Shared Vision
- Challenge the Process
- Enable Others to Act
- Encourage the Heart

Just don't take my word for it. The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership framework has been subjected to rigorous testing for reliability and validity by nearly 1,000 scholars from around the globe. These scholars have used this model in their own studies of leadership as well. And every time, the Five Practices of Exemplary Leader have passed.

## How Leaders make a Difference: The Five Practices in Practice

It turns out that leaders don't do their best when they're maintaining status quo or act/operate within a comfort zone. Leaders do their best when faced with adversity, crisis, setbacks, and great challenges. Difficulty it turns out, is the opportunity for greatness to emerge.

So, what explains why people in the workplace are more thoroughly engaged? The answer goes right back to the question about their work with their best leader. The quality of the leadership that they experience explains how they feel about the place at which they work. These feelings affect their motivation and has a direct impact on their performance and the organization's bottom-line. The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership are directly correlated with employee commitment, retention, and performance. So, great leadership creates great workplaces that produce great results!

So...

- *What exactly are these Five Practices?*
- *What are the leadership behaviors and actions therein that actually make a difference?*
- *In order to become great leaders, what can we do ourselves?*
- *And lastly, what can we do to assist others in improving their leadership abilities?*

Let's take a look at these Five Practices one at a time.

### Model the Way

One of the things leaders told us they did when they were at their best, and what their stakeholders said they did that made them feel engaged in the workplace, is Model the Way. Model the Way is more than just *"Talking the talk and walking the walk."* In order to Model the Way, leaders first have to clarify their values by finding their voice and affirming shared stakeholder values. So, modeling the way comes down to the leader's clarity in values and principles that guide their decisions and actions.

Ultimately, modeling the way is more than just words. It's actions! Exemplary Leaders, it turns out, have to set the example by aligning their actions with their shared principles and values. We've all seen the leader who has talked a good game but was not willing to put in the work that was necessary to achieve success. The truth of the matter is that leaders need to say, as well as do, in order to achieve exemplary results. So, ask yourself the following question: *"What evidence exists that I am living my values and making decisions consistent with them?"* There must be evidence that the words and actions go together, or no stakeholder will believe in or follow you as a leader!

### Model the Way Daily Reflection

So, what can you do as a leader to ensure that you model the way? At the end of each day, ask yourself this question: *"What have I done today that demonstrates the values and principles that I hold near and dear?"* (Of course, this implies that you understand what your values and principles are!) This daily reflection will provide you with a review for what you've done during the day-in your words, your actions, and the responses therein - To be consistent with your core values and principles. You will also want to ask yourself:

1. *What have I done today that might have, even inadvertently, been inconsistent with what it is that I value and the principles that I believe in?*
2. *Tomorrow, what will I need to do differently so that my actions match my words?*

### Inspire a Shared Vision

When leaders are at their personal best, they envision an exciting and bright future. They also enlist others in that common vision, appealing to and developing a shared aspiration. If you're going to lead people effectively, you'd better be willing to tell them a very good reason for them to follow you! The greater the clarity that you can share as a leader with your stakeholders, the greater your stakeholders' ability will be to work effectively, more quickly, and with less stress. Whether it's a chaos or calm environment, leadership with an inspired shared vision provides a point of view about what needs to be done.

So, exactly what kinds of information do stakeholders want more of from their leaders? Think about what type of information you would desire as a stakeholder. We all want to know what reliable information on where the company, department, or team is going. Additionally, we will want to know how our job fits into the big picture.

As a leader, if you can't answer the *"Where am I going?"* and *"How does my job fit?"* questions for yourself, let alone for your stakeholders, you'll experience what's social psychologist call alienation. In the workplace, when people are alienated it is because they have no idea where things are

going and no sense regarding what really matters. As a leader, you have to be able to communicate exactly how everyone involved has something at stake in the organizational outcome.

### Inspire a Shared Vision Daily Reflection

So, what can you do as a leader to increase stakeholder engagement through Inspire a Shared Vision? First, don't lose sight of the future by focusing on the here and now only. Second, communicate your excitement about the role stakeholders are playing to make your organization's mission a reality. Third, speak positively, openly, and often about the brighter future the organization is heading towards.

Three questions you'll want to ask to ensure that you Inspire a Shared Vision:

1. *What is happening in our external environment that is going to affect us in the future?*
2. *Where do I see us in 3 to 5 years?*
3. *What can I do to make sure that we share a common view of our future?*

### Challenge the Process

Successful leadership doesn't happen by conducting business as usual. Exemplary Leadership is about doing things you've never done before. After all, you've never made anything extraordinary happen by keeping things the same, have you? With this in mind, Exemplary Leaders search for opportunities by seizing the initiative and looking both inward, as well as outward, for innovative ways to improve. Exemplary Leaders' experiment and take risks, looking to constantly generate small wins in learn from failures.

When I asked leaders and their stakeholders the question "*When your leader was at their personal best, what was the probability of success?*" The responses were very interesting, because the probability of success was not very high. However, when followed up with by asking the question, "*So why did you do it?*" The answer typically came back along the lines of "*Because it was possible.*" Taking the first courageous steps to make something new happen, allows the Exemplary Leader and their stakeholders to move forward by ignoring the probabilities, or what others think couldn't possibly happen, and believe that it was actually possible.

All of this Challenge the Process topic is nothing noteworthy, especially when one challenges for challenge's sake. The Exemplary Leader needs to be challenging for meaning's sake (It's not just about rocking the boat in complaining of how things should be better). In questioning the status quo? There needs to be a positive purpose. Learning doesn't typically happen overnight and sometimes it's not a step-by-step process. The Exemplary Leader recognizes this and provide support for progress in meaningful work.

### Challenge the Process Reflection

Like right fruit on the vine, people will rot if left too long in one place. Support innovation within the organization, Book bank urging your stakeholders to set aside time on their calendars and provide support during those moments when they might otherwise be available. Make certain you were signing people tasks that challenged them, providing growth and development opportunities. A great starting point is weekly asking the following question:

- *What if you done this past week to be more effective than you were last week?*

### Enable Others to Act

While it might be lonely at the top, one of the most important lessons about leadership is that it's not something you do alone. In order to succeed as an Exemplary Leader, you need to not only lead yourself but others. Leadership experiences are not intrapersonal, they are interpersonal. When operating at your best, a leader fosters collaboration through a trust building and relationship facilitation, they also strengthen others' abilities by increasing self-determination and competence development.

When leaders Enable Others to Act, my studies reflect stakeholders are more than 30% more engaged in their work. Keep in mind, it is essential to share information with your team. Many times, leaders think that withholding information will help the team become more focused, or perhaps it has to do with wanting to maintain power over communication for themselves. Sharing information fosters collaboration and open communication with your stakeholders. Leaders that enable others foster relationships, build trust, strengthen stakeholders' abilities, and are perceived to be more effective as leaders.

### Enable Others to Act Reflection

So, what can you do with Enable Others to Act in order to enhance positive work attitudes and promote engagement? Begin by supporting developmental opportunities/experiences that builds stakeholder competency and confidence. Let your stakeholders know that their talents not just for today, for the future. This development will help stakeholders grow and develop over the long-term, something that stakeholders routinely indicate that they not only need, but want to know. Lastly, be sure to give stakeholders the opportunity to use their judgment/discretion. Make certain that they get to exercise their choice in how their work is to be conducted.

### Encourage the Heart

Who likes to be taken advantage of? Who likes to be taken for granted? Exemplary Leaders are on the lookout for stakeholders who are living the values that have been agreed to and achieving the goals that have been identified. When at their personal best, leaders find ways to build the courage necessary for people to not have to struggle to achieve shared aspirations. Think of it this way, if you're asking people to do things that they've never done before, there's a reason why they haven't already done them! Most are probably afraid, so you'll need to make sure that you give them the courage they need to move forward. You do that when you recognize contributions made by showing your appreciation and celebrating the values and victories created.

Over the years, I've asked thousands of leaders the question, *"Do you need encouragement to perform your best?"* The responses turned out to be 50/50 divided between the yes and no. Those that answered no, typically shared that as an adult they don't need encouragement. So, I reframed the question by asking, *"When you get encouragement does it help stimulate and sustain your performance?"* With this reframing of question, nearly 100% said yes!

All of us need encouragement to perform at our best, even while recognizing that what this means for one person maybe totally different for another. The differences typically lie in how it is that people like to be recognized. Most want us to know that they are doing a good job and that their contributions are not being taken for granted, unappreciated, or unvalued.

This points to different research on the topic of positivity that's been conducted in the workplace. The first core truth about positivity and the emotions therein is that they open our hearts and our

minds, making each of us more receptive and more creative. That's what's so important about encouraging the heart!

### Encourage the Heart Reflection

So, what can you do to encourage the heart and make an impact? Think about how many times a day you think somebody for their contributions to the success of the organization. Whatever number of times you come up with, attempt to AA tomorrow! Of course, you can't make your appreciation trivial, insincere, or on a quid pro quo basis. Make certain that your stakeholders know that you genuinely care about them and about what they're doing. Remember, you're not just giving recognition for recognition's sake!

## SUMMARY

You've just reviewed the 5 Practices of the Exemplary Leader:

- Model the Way
- Inspire a Shared Vision
- Challenge the Process
- Enable Others to Act
- Encourage the Heart

What's next? Each of the Five Practices are broken down by six further behavioral statements, and each statement is reviewed in *The BEST Leader in 30 Days!* program through a five minute or less video ([BESTLeaderin30Days.com](http://BESTLeaderin30Days.com) or [BESTLeaderinThirtyDays.com](http://BESTLeaderinThirtyDays.com)). Each lesson is complete with a worksheet for the session that includes a planning tool in the event the practice is something you'd like to improve upon.

So, what are you waiting for? Becoming an Exemplary Leader is only thirty days away! While the thought of becoming an Exemplary Leader is tempting, maybe even lip-licking, and even something you know that you should accomplish for yourself, your stakeholders, and those that love you. But it also is a huge or elephant like undertaking. So, I've broken it down for you into 30 bite-sized lessons. After all, how do you successfully eat an elephant? That's right, one bight at a time!

I'm Sam Palazzolo, Principal Officer at The Javelin Institute. We'll see you at *The BEST Leader in 30 Days!* graduation ceremony... Enjoy!

PS – Before you jump-in, please review the following section, titled “So What Do You Have to Gain (or Lose!)” for a special offer from me!

## So What Do You Have to Gain (or Lose!)

Leaders who use The Five Practices more frequently than their counterparts, elicit the following outcomes or results:

- Create higher performing teams
- Generate increased sales and customer satisfaction levels
- Foster renewed loyalty and greater organizational commitment
- Enhance motivation and the willingness to work hard
- More successfully represent their units to upper management
- Facilitate high patient satisfaction scores and more efficiently meet family member needs
- Promote high degrees of involvement and engagement
- Enlarge the size of their organizations through growth
- Increase fundraising results and expanded gift-giving levels
- Extend the range of their organization services
- Increase employee retention, reducing absenteeism and turnover costs
- Positively influence recruitment rates

So, which of The Five Practices will you fail at? Which of The Five Practices can you afford to fail at? What are the ensuing costs if success is not achieved? To find out how to avoid failure and architect a plan for success, schedule a [Complimentary Consultation Session](#) with me and begin your success journey today. Here's the link where you can schedule a complimentary 30-minute session today:

[CLICK HERE](https://calendly.com/spalazzolo/30min)

or enter the following URL into your browser:

<https://calendly.com/spalazzolo/30min>

## About the Author



Sam Palazzolo is Managing Director of Tip of the Spear Ventures ([tipofthespearventures.com](http://tipofthespearventures.com)) and Principal Officer at The Javelin Institute ([javelininstitute.org](http://javelininstitute.org)), both based in Las Vegas, Nevada USA. Tip of the Spear is a global Private Equity | Venture Capital and Business Advisory Services (M&A | Sales/Business Development | Turnaround) firm.

The Javelin Institute is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on assisting those that face family hardship (Death, Disease, Divorce, Drugs, etc.) serving corporate donors through Leadership Development (Strategy | Innovation | Change | Execution) and Executive Coaching.



## Resources and Further Reading

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