Are you a great manager but not sure how to be a leader? It’s a pretty daunting idea to be the one that people follow. We tend to make out that you need superstar traits to be a great leader and for most of us we just don’t see ourselves in that way.

There are some leadership qualities that anyone can adopt that will make him or her a better leader:

1) BE A HAPPY EASY GOING PERSON

Staff respond to leaders that are in charge. Not the old school version of being the strict controlling boss – that will actually push people away. Leaders that are confident in their own abilities, are clear about where things are headed and are easy going about the challenges and take a “whatever happens I/we can handle it” approach. This confidence attracts loyal followers and creates extraordinary results.

2) WORK HARDER THAN ANYONE ELSE

You can’t ask your staff to do what you won’t. It’s not about doing peoples work for them or never taking a break. It’s about leading by example and demonstrating that you are willing to do everything you can to make your organisation a success. That way you are setting the standard for everyone else to follow and will be more likely to succeed because hard work brings rewards.

IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED:

- Read Section 3 of People Power: How to Activate, Energise and Inspire the most valuable asset in your business by Andrea Tunjic
- Listen to HBR Idea Cast – quick and easy way to pick up on all things leadership and success.
HOW TO UNLEASH YOUR INNER LEADER

3) BECOME A STUDENT AGAIN

Whether it’s getting formal qualifications, or reading books, or listening to podcasts by amazing leaders, or asking for feedback from your staff, seeking learning and growing will help you become a great leader. The best part of doing this is you learn as much about what you can improve on as you do about what not to do. When you stop learning you go stale and right now all things work are changing and we need to learn new ways to take advantage of these changes.

4) “ME PROOF” YOURSELF

We’ve all got our strengths and weaknesses. As leaders we are in a unique position that everything we do and say will have an impact and it can end well or badly. The more we work to understand our attitudes and actions impact on others, especially the people we want to follow us the more we can minimise some of our “less useful” ways. All it takes is a willingness to become more self aware and ensure that you are acting from the highest standard you know now.

5) PUT PEOPLE FIRST

People first is the biggest shift we have seen in business in the last few years. It’s become so big because it drives profits, attracts the best talent and it brings out the best in our staff in our modern business world. At the heart of putting people first are strong, respectful relationships. As a leader we need to see our people as one of the most valuable assets we have and that means looking after them.

TRY THESE EXERCISES:

▸ What do you need to focus on to unleash your inner leader?
▸ How might your organisation benefit by you being a better leader?
▸ What are 3 things you can do this week to build your leadership skills?

“Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself.

When you become a leader, success is all about growing others”

Jack Welch