

Servant Leaders

We can become the type of individuals who will inspire others to be the best they can be and provide exceptional service.

by **Linda Yates**

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Last month in the article “The Extra Mile”, the reference “servant leader” was used to describe the general manager of a historical hotel that I had one of the most memorable service encounters of my life. So that you can see I keep my promises, let’s explore together what a servant leader typifies.

What comes to your mind as we use this term servant leader? Do you have a positive reaction to the term or do you believe it describes someone with weak qualities? I have found that some of the individuals in my life who are my heroes, possess this time-honored and obtainable, guiding value.

To be a servant leader you recognize that those you serve are the most valuable asset to your organization. Your job is to enable those you oversee or lead to be able to do their job to the highest degree.

Servant leaders possess many attributes. One of the most important attributes they possess is the ability to inspire, lift and empower those they lead. I love the word inspire. This word means to give breath or life. Think back with me on those who have inspired you the most throughout your life. Hopefully this brings a smile to your face. These individuals are willing to put others ahead of themselves. They understand that if we

seek each other's interest that we all prosper rather than just the individual.

Perhaps you are trying to learn how to be a servant leader but are afraid that you are giving up control.

The highest form of control is self-control. When you exercise self control you have the ability to determine how you will react in any given situation.

Let me share with you an experience by Frank Koch in *Proceedings*, Naval Institute magazine.

Two battleships had been on training assignments at sea for several days in extreme weather conditions. Frank Koch was serving on the lead battleship and was on watch on the bridge as it became nightfall. Due to poor visibility and patchy fog the captain remained on the bridge overseeing all the activities.

Shortly after dark, the lookout on the wing of the bridge reported, "Light, bearing on the starboard bow." The captain asked, "Is it steady or moving astern?" Lookout replied, "Steady, captain," which meant we were on a collision course with the other ship. The captain then ordered the signalman, "signal that ship: we are on a collision course, advise you change course 20 degrees." Back came a signal, "advisable for you to change course 20 degrees." The captain said, "Send, I'm a captain, change course 20 degrees." "I'm a seaman second class," came the reply. "You had better change course 20 degrees." By that time, the captain was furious. He spat out, "Send, I'm a battleship. Change course 20 degrees." Back came the flashing light, "I'm a lighthouse." The battleship changed course.

Lighthouses don't move. They are guided by principles and laws. We have the privilege of developing qualities and following guiding principles that if developed from our conscience, will not run us to dry ground.

We can become the type of individuals who will inspire others to be the best they can be and provide exceptional service. The more you practice following your conscience the stronger it will become and the result will be one of pleasure and prosperity throughout all areas of your life.

True joy comes from positive interactions with others.

May you have the courage to listen and obey your conscience throughout your life and be able to teach others to do the same.

Linda Yates has more than 20 years of experience in sales, customer service, marketing, business development and fund raising. She has spoken on topics such as leadership, customer service, personal development and growth, business marketing and communication. She has written for national publications on marketing strategy planning and development and has been a highly sought after asset for a variety of businesses and organizations.

She currently leads the exciting and diverse real estate training experiences on behalf of an industry leading organization. From online seminars to workshops to boot camps, she implements the educational programs that help investors and first-time home buyers thrive in today's real estate market. With extensive project planning, public speaking and educational training experience, Linda distills complex issues into easy-to-understand messages that help individuals from all walks of life achieve their real estate goals.

Prior to working in the real estate industry, Linda executed motivation and training programs to thousands of individuals from several Fortune 500 companies on their internal processes and strategic initiatives throughout North America.

She is no stranger to the world of technology where she advised middle market companies on leveraging their existing business systems and to how maximize their customer relationships through technology.

Linda's expertise is being a conduit to facilitate growth from a personal or

business setting. She believes that if you “talk” about it, you better be willing to “walk the talk”.

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