

Be a Billion Dollar Leader

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TODAY! Seminars. Sydney, Australia

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First edition

**Dedicated to the most fantastic, high performing
Billion Dollar sales team.**

**What a privilege it was to lead you:
Andrew W, Rhonda, Andrew J, Bruce, Simon, Ben, Dominic,
Anthony and Alison.**

- Introduction -

Leadership!

Since time immemorial people of all races, creeds and social standing have followed the call of great leaders.

Nations have risen from nothing or have been conquered; seas have been sailed in voyages of discovery into the unknown, or for trade; people have given their lives or been given life; ideas have been acted on and history made—all at the behest of a great leader. King Richard I, Queen Victoria, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, “Weary” Dunlop, Sir Arvi Parbo all names synonymous with strong, positive leadership.

Conversely, acts of cruelty, deception, war, death, destruction, atrocity, famine and murder have been carried out by people following a leader who has led them on the wrong path. One only needs to recall the names of Hitler, Pol Pot, Stalin, and Jim Jones of the Jonestown mass suicide infamy to see that the charismatic qualities of a great leader can be used for ignoble purposes.

In today’s world, corporations have been born and destroyed by the implementation of qualities and ethics endorsed by the leaders of those companies. Names like those of Richard Branson, Lee Iacocca and Bob Ansett stand out against their ethical opposites such as Bernard Ebbers, Kenneth Lay and Christopher Skase.

Many books, thousands of words, have been written in order to describe the illusive characteristics that make a leader great. Anyone wanting to know how to be a great leader can borrow them from any local library. Libraries are filled with biographies of great leaders – biographies that expose their actions, their achievements and their skill at making the impossible possible.

Yet somehow, when it comes to leadership in the workplace we seem to have missed the point of what makes a great leader great. So often the qualities that make a leader even mediocre seem lacking in business and the community in general.

Why, with all this information available to us, is that so?

I believe that in the corporate world we have simply confused the principles of managing people with the principles and the qualities of great leadership!

For years we have been conned into believing that good management skills equaled good leadership. *The truth is that good management skills makes you a good manager!*

For over 16 years I have been asked to conduct “leadership” training for national and international companies both in Australia and overseas. And, like every other trainer or executive development specialist that I know, I conducted “leadership” development programmes on such topics as effective communication, effective feedback and appraisal systems, personal effectiveness, staff recognition and development programmes, change management, project management, staff selection and interviewing, quality customer service management, image and presentation skills and so on.

And, until recently, I like so many others, including the executives and training managers who hired me, believed that what we were doing was developing the leadership skills of their management team.

But now I know I was wrong.

What I have learned is that you can have excellent time management skills and not be a leader.

You can have great communication, feedback and interpersonal skills and still not be a great leader.

You can have fantastic change management, goal setting, reward and recognition and delegation skills and still only be a great manager and not a great leader.

True, a great leader displays all of those capabilities in varying degrees. But *leadership, truly great leadership, is more about the heart, the character of a person* and not just the dry, but important, skills that are defined in nearly every text book or course that claims to be about leadership.

Don't confuse being a manager with being a leader. There is a difference. You can be one and not necessarily be the other.

Now some managers will disagree with that statement. I have often had some interesting comments made to me when I dared declare that a manager does not a leader make.

But ask any worker in the workplace and they will surely tell you that they know of a manager who is definitely not a good leader. (You may even find that they will define someone as a great leader who does not necessarily display great management skills).

So, in the age old question, are leaders born or developed? Well the answer is – both. There are some truly gifted individuals who are born leaders. The rest of us, including myself, are left with the struggle to grow beyond being just good managers into leaders.

These *Ten Lessons in Being a Billion Dollar Leader* will take you to the heart of strong, ethical leadership.

The *Ten Lessons* defined in this book are lessons learned from over 26 years of being in management and leadership roles. They are the lessons learned from observing great leaders in both my military and civilian life. The lessons come from researching the qualities people say they look for in a great leader. They are lessons I have learned from leading high performing, high achieving, billion dollar teams. They are even lessons learned from being a father of four magnificent children.

Amazingly *The Ten Lessons* are not that complicated. In clear, plain language, these lessons are so simple that even a manager could follow them.

You, like me, may not be one of the gifted, born-leaders in this world. But we can all take heart from the fact that these lessons are based more on attitude than on academic qualities. You can take heart that attitudes are something we each, individually control.

This means that we can all become great leaders if we want to.

Colin Emerson

December 2007

- Lesson 1 -

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I first learned about leadership at the very beginning of my time in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). Indeed, that first lesson in leadership has since been reinforced many times over in both my professional and personal lives.

I learned that there are two types of respect given to leaders: the respect of their rank (or position) and the respect of the person.

Respect of rank is a given. Rank describes the position of an individual in the hierarchy of an organisation. You salute the rank even if you don't know or respect the individual.

Respect of the person is something that is earned. This respect takes time to develop and comes from really getting to know the person behind the rank. It is gained through the example set by that individual's actions and behaviour. This is the type of respect that may see others following that person to the death – no matter what rank they hold.

Respect of the person is much deeper than *any* respect of rank.

Case Study - The Pilot Officer.

I learned the difference between the two on my RAAF rookies' course. My flight would line up outside of our barracks every morning in preparation for the daily inspection by our Drill Sergeant; and nearly every morning a young Pilot Officer would ride his pushbike past us on his way to the Flight Line.

Now, for those who don't know, a pilot officer is the most junior RAAF officer rank and usually applies to someone so fresh out of the Australian Defence Force Academy that they still have pimples.

Our course orderly, Doug, had been in the armed services previously and, right on cue, would bring the flight to attention, "about turn" and give his very best salute to this inexperienced officer. Then, to our great amusement, the Pilot Officer would attempt to salute us in return while trying to maintain control of his bike—without fail!

What the pilot officer didn't recognise was that we did this just to see his antics while trying to salute and simultaneously ride his bike! He was so responsive to our display of respect for his rank that he was insistent on putting his own personal safety at risk. We were actually making use of his rank to mock him and, in so doing, we were showing absolutely no respect to him as an individual.

We only stopped when our sergeant, whom we did respect both in rank and as a person, threatened some form of grievous physical retribution on our whole flight for, "trying to kill by stupidity an individual who knows no better and is carried away with his new-found rank!"

Don't confuse respect of the rank or position as being respect for the person themselves

A Word on real respect

Why is it that when new managers are promoted to a leadership role, so many of them beat their chest and demand that their staff respect *them* personally? Why *should* they be respected as individuals by their team? After all what have they done *personally* to *earn* their team's respect—other than getting promoted?

A Billion Dollar Leader is someone who understands that real respect from the people they lead, respect that goes beyond that for their position and which is for the individual themselves, *is a respect that must be earned.*

The Billion Dollar Leader knows it is *what* they do and *how* they do it that will earn them the real respect of the team.

They know they have to work to gain this respect and that it is not automatically given. They know it is what they *do* and not the work of others that generates this respect. They understand that reputation counts for little and that what they have done in the past is nowhere near as important as what they do now and in the future.

They know that true respect for them as an individual can only be given voluntarily and not forced from their team.

They know they must take on board all the lessons set out in this book in order to earn that respect.

Case Study - Julie: a leader to respect

One of the best leaders I have had the privilege to work with was Julie T. I met Julie while working with a major Australian insurance company. It would be true to say that Julie was tough in some ways, but extremely fair. She expected much but also gave much. She encouraged her team and rewarded excellence. She showed her willingness to develop her staff and that she would stand and fight for them. On more than one occasion she “took-on” individuals in the national management team and stood up for what she knew was right.

However, Julie didn't display her great leadership skills only in the workplace. She also took them into the 'real' world and would

stand up against poor management practices anywhere she found them.

One story that gained the team's respect (and which earned her "legend" status) occurred when she was shopping at her local supermarket. She heard the Store Manager carrying on to one of his senior staff, in front of the customers and the other staff, about how some of his team were so pathetic. Apparently this was because one of his staff had asked if they could have their scheduled morning tea break—even though it was busy and their break had already been delayed because of this.

As Julie progressed to the check-out, she (and everyone else!) continued to hear about this manager's problems with his poorly skilled staff and how hard they made his life. So, when she arrived at the check-out, she quietly asked the manager if she could have a word with him. She began by confirming that he did indeed have staff who performed poorly and who displayed behaviours that weren't up to the standards he desired.

She then asked him if he had ever explained his expectations to his staff. When he stated that he hadn't and that he shouldn't have to anyway, Julie responded with a magnificent line, "Could I suggest that you don't have a staff problem? What you have is a management problem!"

As she left the store she was approached by staff members who thanked her for saying what she had—they had wanted to say such things for some time but felt they couldn't. She had not only earned her team's respect as a leader in the workplace, but she had also earned the respect of the staff at her supermarket. The more our team learned about Julie, the more highly we regarded her.

The Billion Dollar Leader knows that they have a position to fill and a role to perform. They understand that the traits and behaviours

they display as a person, their own characteristics, personality and integrity are what will lead their team to respect them.

Importantly though, they understand the difference between being liked and being respected. To the Billion Dollar Leader, respect is more important than being liked. They are willing to be disliked for what they do.

Far too often managers will attempt to do only the things that they think will be popular with their staff and hope to gain respect that way. Their teams certainly like the easy life that such a leader brings to the workplace, but in the end this management style does not earn respect—often the exact opposite. Their team members will often pick this up as a sign of weakness in their leader and *lose* respect for them as a result.

A Billion Dollar Leader doesn't expect respect. They understand that it is an honour they must earn and that it can never be forced from their team. They are often humbled when they do receive it—but are pleased to have earned it.

That's what makes the Billion Dollar Leader so special *and* so successful!

Questions for the Billion Dollar Leader:

- 1. Do I expect my team to respect me just because of the position I hold or because of what I do?*
- 2. What have I done or what do I do to earn the respect of my team?*
- 3. What do I need to do to earn the respect of my team?*