

A sample of direct quotes selected from 315 leadership articles I hold

Andrew Gibbons

From: “The five necessary attributes of a servant leader” Larry Boone and Sanya Makhani. *St John University review of business* Volume 13 Number 1 Winter 2012-13 Pages 83-96.

P 83 “According to the authors, servant leadership can be a highly effective style for influencing a group toward the achievement of organisational goals if a leader possesses or can readily adopt the following attributes:

1. Believing that visioning isn’t everything, but it is the beginning of everything
2. Listening is hard work, requiring a major investment of personal time and effort, and is worth every ounce of energy expended
3. My job involves being a talent scout and committing to my staff’s success
4. It’s good to give away power
5. I am a community builder”.

“Servant leadership begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different to one who is a leader first”.

P 84 “Leadership is not comprised of a single characteristic or trait. It is not, as some may incorrectly assume, the hard to define attribute of ‘charisma’. Rather, leadership consists of a large set of well-recognised skills, behaviours and attributes”.

“An attitude is a mental state of readiness learned and organised through experience”.

P 85 “If we are going to be servant leaders we need to start by being servants”.

“Transforming from conventional leader to servant leader is not a simple task. It requires a conscious effort to change one’s way of *‘being’*”.

“The five most important ways of *‘being’* are to:

1. Authentic
2. Vulnerable
3. Accepting
4. Present
5. Useful

“A vital prerequisite to servant leadership is *credibility*, which is the foundation of leadership. People must believe in their leaders, and know that they are worthy of trust”.

“To build credibility leaders must be:

1. Honest
2. Forward-looking
3. Inspiring
4. Competent

Kouzes and Posner 2007

“Leaders who put their organisation and people before themselves and don’t lead from the top are true servant leaders.

They:

1. Listen
2. Have empathy
3. Help people heal
4. Know the value of learning
5. Possess foresight
6. Are persuasive and flexible
7. Lead with a vision
8. Work hard to gain trust
9. Are passionate about helping their people progress and reach their potential
10. Work hard to build a community within their organisation”.

“Servant leaders have a vision for the future. They communicate the desired direction of the organisation with regard to its mission, values and beliefs. Servant leaders break down this vision into small attainable goals that accumulate to their inspiring ‘big picture’ maintaining the progress and the organisation at its core (Vinod and Sudhaker 2001)”.

P 86 “Liden et al (2008) developed a multi-dimensional measure of servant leadership by identifying nine dimensions:

1. Emotional healing - the act of showing sensitivity to other’s personal concerns
2. Creating value for the community - a conscious, genuine concern for helping the community

3. Conceptual skills – possessing the knowledge of the organisation and tasks at hand so as to be in a position to effectively support and assist others, especially immediate followers
4. Empowering – encouraging and facilitating others in identifying and solving problems, as well as determining when and how to complete work tasks
5. Helping subordinates grow and succeed – demonstrating genuine concern for other’s career growth and development by providing support and mentoring
6. Putting subordinates first – using actions and words to make it clear to others (especially immediate followers) that satisfying their work needs is a priority
7. Behaving ethically – interacting openly, fairly and honestly with others
8. Relationships – the act of making a genuine effort to know, understand and support others in the organisation, with an emphasis on building long-term relationships with immediate followers
9. Servanthood – a way of being marked by one’s self-categorisation and desire to be characterised by others as someone who serves others first, even when self-sacrifice is required”.

P 87 “Servant leadership requires a particular set of attitudes towards one’s colleagues. The leader sees him/herself not at the top of the pyramid, but more in a position within the pyramid”.

“As a servant leader one does not force people to follow but walks among them and moves in a direction that can unite all in a common vision”.

“A servant leader listens and comprehends, refraining from the constant issuance of orders”.

“Servant leadership is not just a management style, but also a set of attitudes that need to be developed by leaders who choose to adopt it”.

Servant leadership can only be accomplished “If the ‘leader’ leads with a compelling vision, sets clear behavioural expectations, and serves as an authentic practitioner of the values proclaimed”.

“First and foremost, servant leaders lead through their vision, their mental picture, and oral description of what tomorrow will be like”.

“Visions incorporate hopes, dreams and aspirations. They are ambitious and optimistic”.

“Tichy (1997) proposes that a leader must be capable of communicating three kinds of stories to his/her constituents:

1. Who I am: Stories that relate one’s own personal values and experiences in order to reveal oneself to followers and earn their trust
2. Who we are: Stories that provide a sense of group identity, either through common experiences or mission

3. Future story: That describes where the group is going, why the group must (or must not) change, and how they will get there”.

P 88 “Leaders listen deeply with their ears, eyes and hearts, not just to follower’s words but to their emotions”.

“Leaders know what inspires their constituents because they spend time listening to constituent’s needs and desires”.

“As spokespersons for their organisations, ‘leaders hold up a mirror, and reflect back to their constituents what they most desire (Kouzes and Posner 2004)”.

“Servant leaders know that the secret to winning the support of numerous is to lead them (at least in part), where they already want to go”.

“Visions are often described as fulfilling the role of the North Star. They provide a constant bearing as leaders and followers are buffeted by the day-to-day challenges of achieving something new”.

“A well communicated vision will aid in attracting those who share the values and aspirations expressed in the vision”.

Leaving ample opportunities for others to contribute creates an environment for empowerment, and that is a vital element of servant leadership”.

P 89 “The possibility of failure prevents many would-be leaders from establishing and emerging vision with organisational reach”.

“Consider what many managers (not leaders) frequently do. They carefully plan a future that is incrementally better than today. They devise prudently a series of sequential steps that will lead to their future. Before they begin, they know what they will do, where they will attain the resources, and how success will be achieved. In other words, they play it safe, avoiding much chance of failure. In many instances this may be effective management, but it is not leadership”.

“Servant leaders possess courage: They risk failure, they provide leadership that will take followers to places they have never been before (Kouzes and Posner 2004)”.

“That is not to say that servant leaders take wild chances when they establish visions...they gather information from many sources, listening to members of their own management team, other people in their own organisation, and leaders from other organisations”.

“You’ve got to have faith that you can take your people all the way. If you can’t confidently make the trip in your own mind, you’re not going to be able to take it in real life (John Maxwell)”.

“Inexperienced leaders are quick to lead before they intend to lead – but mature leaders listen, learn, then lead”.

P 90 “Servant leaders are present - that is, available to their constituents – they ‘walk the shop’, engaging in informal conversations in order to know and be known to followers”.

“The most significant direct effects of listening involve:

1. Building trust between the servant leader and followers
2. Increasing the self-esteem of followers”.

“When a leader listens intently to follower’s ideas s/he demonstrates respect for their opinions, helping develop a bond of trust”.

“When a leader listens, followers conclude their ideas are important, helping to raise their self-esteem and its related outcomes such as higher job satisfaction, productivity, and organisation commitment”.

“More directly, listening can inform servant leaders of their follower’s experiences and lead to adopting such experiences to enhance organisational innovation”.

“Effective servant leaders share a common attitude that ‘everyone is great at something’, and it is their responsibility to help followers realise how they can apply whatever special talents they can offer towards the achievement of the organisation ‘s vision”.

“Follower’s organisational contributions are not limited by their formal organisational role or by their specific job description, but are enabled by their special talent to take the organisation toward its vision via a new, unplanned direction”.

“The support of a servant leader can make a difference in the careers and lives of their followers...followers in turn, come to believe in their leaders and trust their intentions to help them develop skills that will lead to improvements in their organisational positions as well as their contributions to the organisation’s vision”.

“Strong leaders stand apart because they assess the abilities of others and assist them in capturing the best of those abilities”.

“According to Ortberg, some of the most powerful words a leader can offer to a follower are ‘I am committed to your success’ “.

“We have to learn how to put the same trust in other people that we put in ourselves and then release them to do the work (Ortberg 2004).”

P 92 “Servant leaders accept and act on the paradox of power: You become more powerful when you give your own power away (Kouzes and Posner 2007)”.

“Only secure leaders give power to others (John Maxwell 1998)”.

“When a leader can’t or won’t empower others, he creates barriers within the organisation that people cannot overcome. If the barriers remain long enough, then the people give up, or they move to another organisation where they can maximise their potential (Maxwell 1998)”.

“People must have the latitude to make decisions based on what they believe should be done...they must hold themselves personally accountable for the results as well as feel ownership for their achievements (Kouzes and Posner 2007)”.

“Leaders who give their power away do not blindly agree with the decisions and opinions of their followers. Giving power away does not mean the inmates run the prison (Blanchard 2004)”.

P 93 “Related closely to their practice of humility, servant leaders adopt the attitude that they need not be right all the time. They know and act on the concept that other people have good ideas too”.

“By including others in decision-making and creative endeavours, by knowing they need not be right all the time, and by admitting mistakes when appropriate, servant leaders build trust with followers, facilitate follower’s effectiveness, and enhance their own influence over the long term. In other words, they grow stronger by giving away their power”.

“Servant leaders recognise that their success derives from the attitude that they are leading an organisational effort to develop a productive community”.

“Servant leaders don’t think less of themselves, they just think of themselves less (Blanchard 2004)”.

“A leader-constituent relationship that’s characterised by fear and distrust will never ever produce anything of lasting value”.

P 94 “To build community successfully, it is imperative to select the right people”.

“ ‘Good to great leaders first get the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats”.

“Developing the attitude to ask ‘what can a man do?’ instead of ‘what can he not do?’ helps a leader to see strengths clearly and direct those strengths toward the common vision (Drucker 2006)”.

“Leaders help people see that what they are doing is bigger than themselves, even than the business. It’s something noble (Kouzes and Posner 2007)”.

“Organisational effectiveness depends on the strength of the community that the leader builds by choosing the right people for the right job”.

“The leader must bring together people with five qualities when including them into the inner circle:

1. Potential value: Those who raise up themselves
2. Positive value: Those who raise morale in the organisation
3. Personal value: Those who raise up the leader
4. Production value: Those who raise others
5. Proven value: Those who raise up people who raise up other people

John Maxwell 1998

“Community building is supported by hosting and other addressing organisational gatherings and taking time to celebrate organisational successes”.

“The best leaders know that every gathering is a chance to renew commitment. They never let pass an opportunity to make sure that everyone knows why they’re all there and they’re going to act in service of that purpose (Kouzes and Posner 2007)”.

“Servant leaders make themselves visible where work is being done, where client’s needs are being served”.

P 95 “Servant leaders take care to recognise both individual and team achievements through rewards, awards, gifts and thank-yous of many types”.

“Servant leaders know that without their reinforcement organisational values diffuse and visions blur”.

“As discussed by Autry (2001) one of the natural extensions of servant leadership is strong corporate social responsibility and community service, modelled by the leader, and practiced by numerous organisation members”.

“While payoffs in effectiveness can be substantial, successful application of servant leadership may require a substantial amount of time. The servant leadership approach, like many other leadership styles, requires not only technical competence and a variety of interpersonal skills, but also a great deal of patience, perseverance and dedication”.

In addition the growing leadership summary resource has contributions from the following sources

“The leader’s guide to corporate culture” Boris Groysberg et al. *Harvard Business Review* January/February 2018 Pages 44-52

“You don’t have to say you love me” Dave Wakely. *Training Journal* September 2016 Pages 32-35.

“Leading the team you inherit” Michael Watkins. *Harvard Business Review* June 2016 Pages 60-67

“3D leadership” Alan Patterson. *Talent Development* April 2016 Pages 56-60.

“How do we fix our leadership crisis?” Howard Prager. *Talent Development* March 2016 Pages 30-34.

”Prepare tomorrow’s leaders today” Scott Steinberg. *Talent Development* January 2016 Pages 48-53.

“The focused leader – how effective executives direct their own and their organisation’s attention” Daniel Goleman. *Harvard Business Review* December 2013 Pages 51-58 and 60.

“The hidden work of leadership” Peter Frost. *Leader to leader* Fall 2003 Pages 13-18.

“Managers and leaders – are they different?” Abraham Zaleznik. *Harvard Business Review* January 2004 Pages 74-81.

“Servant leadership: Its origin, development, and application in organisations” Sen Sedjaya and James Sarros. *Journal of leadership and organisation studies* Volume 9 Number 2 2002 Pages 57-64.

“On a clear day you can have a vision: A visioning model for everyone” Richard Allen. *Leadership and Organisation Development Journal* Volume 16 Number 4 1995 Pages 39-44.

“What leaders really do” John Kotter. *Harvard Business Review* May/June 1990 Pages 103-111.

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