

LEARNING LEADERSHIP

The Five Fundamentals of Becoming an Exemplary Leader

JAMES M. KOUZES and BARRY Z. POSNER

JAMES M. KOUZES is currently teaching at Santa Clara University where he is the Dean's Executive Fellow of Leadership at the School of Business. He has won many awards for his teaching style including an award for one of the best executive educators in the U.S. given by *The Wall Street Journal*. He has teamed up with Barry Posner to write more than thirty publications including the bestseller books *The Leadership Challenge*, *The Truth About Leadership* and *Credibility*. James Kouzes is a graduate of Michigan State University.

BARRY Z. POSNER is Professor of Leadership at the School of Business at Santa Clara University. In addition to writing books and developing leadership training programs with James Kouzes, Barry Posner also consults with a wide variety of companies. He is a graduate of the University of California, Santa Barbara, Ohio State University and the Isenberg School of Management at UMass Amherst.

ISBN 978-1-77544-898-3

MAIN IDEA

How exactly do you learn how to lead?



The reality is the best leaders are pretty much always the best learners. Leadership is really nothing more than applying a set of abilities which, just like any other skill-set, can be learned and then progressively improved over time. While learning how to lead isn't easy, you only become a better leader when you consistently apply five leadership development practices:



"If you believe that the people you now lead, or will lead in the future, deserve the best leadership in the world and if it's clear that there's a growing need for an increased quantity and quality of leaders, then it is imperative that you become the best leader you can be. Step one is to develop a leadership mindset. You don't have to wait for an organization to offer a program for you to become the best. Nor do you have to wait for someone else to give you permission or provide some special resource."

– James Kouzes and Barry Posner

The Five Fundamentals of Learning Leadership



Shattering the Myths Page 2

Usually the first step towards becoming a great leader is to debunk the big five myths about leadership:

- 1 – Only the highly talented can be leaders
- 2 – Leadership is a title
- 3 – You should only lead if you are naturally strong
- 4 – Leaders have to do it all themselves
- 5 – Leaders are born, not made

First and foremost, see the folly of these myths.

Fundamental #1 – Believe you can Page 3

To become a good leader, you have to believe that you can lead. Leaders are always learning because they have a growth mindset coupled with confidence the future is bright. Keep learning and leadership will flow authentically from the inside out.

Fundamental #2– Aspire to excel Page 4

To lead well, you need to have clear in your mind your core values and beliefs. Good leaders are always forward looking and draw people forward towards a greater purpose than themselves. To lead, make the people who are with you successful.

Fundamental #3 – Challenge yourself Page 5

To develop as a leader you have to step outside your comfort zone and do challenging things. In other words, get gritty. Do things that scare you and persist. Be courageous enough to head in new and exciting directions.

Fundamental #4 – Engage support Pages 6 - 7

High performers, including leaders, seek out support and advice on the best way to move things forward. To become a better leader, get connected. Seek open and honest feedback on how you're doing. Without feedback, you won't grow.

Fundamental #5 – Practice deliberately Pages 7 - 8

To get better at leading, you have to practice. Have a daily, lifelong commitment to learning and then doing what you learn. Commit to being the best and then do little things every day that progress you towards that goal. Leaders keep hope alive.