



Leadership is the Conversation... Leading from your Values

Much has been written about the “heart of the true leader.” When you research the subject of leadership various formulas can be found for developing your leadership capabilities. However, most of the more contemporary leadership gurus (Marcus Buckingham, Marshall Goldsmith, Robert Hogan, Ben Zander, etc.) advocate a more thorough self-awareness of what “makes you tick.” Improving your leadership style means getting more intimate with your values as a human being. The true character of a leader will emanate from these values. But that represents two challenges for us as leaders. The first is obvious – get better acquainted with who you really are. Introspection, reflection, meditation, prayer, and examination through various assessments will assist us with that challenge. The second challenge is more difficult. This is the challenge of having our values show up in the world through our behaviors, words, deeds, and reactions to adversity. Kevin Cashman described this one time as a circle within a circle. The inner circle is our character and the outer circle is our persona. The persona is what people see, but the character is who we are. Only when these two entities are in alignment can we truly be considered a great leader. Showing our vulnerability by exposing our inner character can be a bit intimidating. And, naturally we need to have some discretion when showing others our true inner selves. But the key is to find out who you truly are so you can make a conscientious choice to be a leader who leads from their values. You can’t lead from values when you can’t pinpoint what your values are.

Leader – Know Thyself

Self-awareness is the key to many professions. Socrates once said that the unexamined life is not worth living. What he meant by that is that the energy of life is found in exploring not what is outside but what is inside of you. It’s difficult to lead or manage when you can’t align your insides with what you are experiencing on the outside. As difficult as it is to do in our hectic lives, Marshall Goldsmith advocates that we leaders should spend at least 15 minutes each day contemplating our values and reflecting upon how we might bring them to the world that day. Hard? Yes! Rewarding? Definitely!

Self-examination and development can also be enhanced by utilizing various tools to get a better perspective on two things – **Your Identity** (how you see yourself) and **Your Reputation** (how others see you). **Your Identity** is based on your hopes, dreams, and aspirations. These might or might not show up in your behaviors. **Your Reputation** is defined in terms of your characteristics and behaviors seen by others. Most of us can get a sketch of our identity by instruments such as the **Myers Briggs (MBTI)** or similar assessments. We can get a pretty good picture of our reputation by a **360** process where we ask others to rate us on competencies. Or, we could get a more in-depth picture of our leadership values, potential, identity, and characteristics by combining both identity and reputation via such instruments as the **Hogan Inventories**. These inventories help us understand who we are during “good times”, how we show up during “bad times”, and who we are via our core values.

The key is for us as leaders to continue our exploration however possible to get a clearer picture of ourselves so we can help those who we manage to align their values with ours to create a shared vision.

Equis Consulting has recently been certified in the **Hogan Leadership Forecast Series**. The Hogan Inventories have been used worldwide to further develop leaders via the self-awareness and exploration process. By “sharpening our saw” at Equis we can now offer this development product along with the **Myers Briggs Type Indicator**, **Lominger (Korn Ferry) 360 Voices**, and **Marshall Goldsmith Executive Coaching**.