

THE ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES OF A LEADER

By Ernie L. Sullivan

Organizations, corporations and governments know that their economic well being is dependent upon developing and retaining effective leaders. Billions of dollars are spent each year on training programs and other initiatives to prevent “brain drain” in these organizations. The constant creation of good leaders enables organizations to stand the true test of greatness, “the test of time.”

As the baby boomers continue to age and retire, much attention is being placed on young professionals as these individuals represent the emerging leaders who will be necessary to deliver successful outcomes for our businesses and our communities.

There are many qualities that these emerging leaders must have. What follows represents some of the essential elements of a leader. We must ensure that we are helping to build these components into the next generation of leaders.

DISCIPLINE

Leadership is like exercise; it must be sustained to provide any benefit. This includes having a strong work ethic and detailed follow up on action items.

FORTITUDE

Leaders must drive change by taking ownership and accountability while fighting against bureaucracy and office politics.

HIGH STANDARDS

Abraham Lincoln said, “Things may come to those who wait, but only those things left by those who hustle.” Leaders must have high standards of performance all the time. They must also set high standards of integrity.

OPENNESS

Information sharing is vital to the success of any organization. All issues must be debated and alternative approaches should be discussed and investigated.

MORALE BUILDING

High morale is created by fixing problems and dealing directly and honestly with issues. This earns respect from others. Leaders work hard to foster an environment of fair treatment for all.

HUMILITY

Leaders need to understand that success is based on teamwork. It is not based on their work and efforts alone. Leaders celebrate and recognize the contributions of others.

Maintaining a strong and constant pipeline of leadership is a must as we look to ensure the survival and effectiveness of all of our organizations. *Who's Who In Black Columbus* is proud to recognize the next generation of leaders in our community.



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