

What do managers who are leaders do...

... that managers who aren't leaders don't do?

We believe leaders differentiate themselves from others in four ways. It is important to see that these people are leaders not because they behave in this way: they behave in this way because they are leaders, they have a leadership attitude or approach.

1 The primary way true leaders differentiate themselves is by their responsibility for the framework in which everyone else does their job. We like to describe what the leader does as creating and maintaining a '**facilitating environment**' in which their team thrives. By 'thrive' we mean 'able to do their job effectively, capable of growth and development, with fulfilment'. If the team members are thriving, then so is the team. If all the teams are thriving, then so is the organisation.

2 A key distinguishing feature of true leaders is their ability to deploy many of the **precepts principles of strategic leadership** consistently, continuously and effectively; showing a good understanding of them and of the models, and of how to use this understanding to be useful to, and influential with, other people. But what would happen if everyone in a team, in an organisation, chose to do this? Answer: the best possible team! Nothing in any of what we have described is off limits to members of the team. Everyone will benefit if anyone does better in any of the areas we talk about.

3 Leaders take a **coaching approach** in conversation with their colleagues—everyone, actually—not a telling approach. If leadership is about creating a facilitating environment, it follows leaders have to be good at enabling others to do their work themselves.

4 Ultimately, what true leaders do is **show the way**. Leaders can take their people somewhere they might otherwise not have gone voluntarily. Leaders show, by example, the possibility of doing what they ask of others. Leaders take the risk and go first. By succeeding, and showing how, they motivate everyone else. Leaders create leaders.

This gives leaders a challenge, because this requirement will bring up issues. Leaders have to address their issues. On occasion, they will find this difficult. They'll find superficially rational—and probably convincing—explanations why they shouldn't do it. In short, they will resist 'taking the next step'.

Yet, it is vital to realise that this is the very work which, when successfully completed, will best enable everyone else to move forward.

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