



Leadership on the Go



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Leadership

“Given that [Leadership] ultimately involves guiding, influencing, and directing people, the following working definition is proposed:

Leadership is the sum of those individual traits, skills, and abilities that allow one person to commit and direct the efforts of others toward the accomplishment of a particular objective.

Central to this definition is the understanding that exercising leadership involves **building and sustaining relationships** between leader and followers. Without this bond or connection, there are no willing followers and, therefore, no true leader. Given that no leader operates in a vacuum, it also requires the leader to establish relationships with other relevant constituencies.”

Ed Rehkopf, Leadership on the Line

Discussion Points: In order to lead effectively you must be able to connect with each of your followers. You cannot build relationships without knowing your people. This does not mean you become their friend or buddy; rather it means you understand each person as an individual with unique needs and motivators.

What things can you do to better understand your employees’ needs?

What part does daily communication play in getting to know your employees, understanding their needs and gaining their trust?

What can a leader do to motivate employees to work hard and excel?

How can you influence your employees to do the right things?

What behaviors do you expect in a good leader?

Take Away: You must be able to build and sustain meaningful relationships with your followers in order to lead them effectively.

Service-Based Leadership

“With Service-Based Leadership, the attitude and primary motivation of the leader is service to others—to members, to employees, to shareholders. This approach to leadership naturally creates relationships—the deep and abiding bonds that sustain the efforts of the club. This outward focus of the leader sets up a dynamic where:

- Employees are continually recognized.
- There is an open flow of ideas, opinions, and information.
- Initiative and risk are highly regarded.
- Problem discovery and solution is a focus while placing blame is unimportant.
- Every employee feels energized and part of the team and is valued for his or her contribution.
- Prestige is derived from performance and contribution, not title or position.
- Members are treated well because employees are treated well.
- The energy and initiative of all employees is focused on the common effort.

With Service-Based Leadership, you will find that service to both internal and external customers is effortless. Less energy is expended in processing complaints, grievances, and conflicts. Work is more fun and everyone's job is easier.

Ed Rehkopf, Leadership on the Line

Discussion Points: Service-Based Leadership is a particularly effective style of leadership for the service industry and this can be summed up by the following statement:

“Employees can only provide quality service if they are properly served by the leadership and example of their leaders.”

What things must leaders do to serve their employees?

Why are these things so critical to a leader’s success and that of the club?

Why is a leader’s example so important?

What are the consequences of not properly serving the needs of employees?

Take Away: To be an effective leader you must serve your employees by providing them the proper tools, training, resources, and daily support to do their jobs effectively.

#10 *Becoming a Service-Based Leader*

Teachable Moments

“Successful leadership depends on the quality of relationships between a leader and followers. As such it entails relationship skills – the personal characteristics and abilities to connect with and inspire the enthusiastic efforts of a diverse group of people toward a common goal.

True leadership requires an understanding of what makes people tick – individually and in group settings. It requires sensitivity to the needs and desires of others. It requires openness and accessibility so followers are comfortable bringing their concerns and issues to the leader. It requires a person who is self-analytical, who examines every less-than-optimum outcome for improvement, often discovering a better way to interact with followers. It requires a person who puts the needs of the enterprise ahead of personal ambition, who recognizes that tending to the group welfare in a disciplined way will ultimately bring about better performance.

Finally, learning leadership skills is not a one-time event. Just as different endeavors and levels of organizations require different skill sets for managerial success, leadership skills must expand and develop as the individual moves up to higher levels of responsibility. But the skills learned in the early years of one’s career will be the foundation for the broader skills necessary when one takes on greater responsibilities, particularly if you understand that true leadership is a lifelong journey, not a destination.”

Ed Rehkopf, Leadership on the Line – The Workbook

Discussion Points: Discuss the following points and why they are important to becoming a Service-Based Leader.

Sensitivity to the needs and desires of others.

Openness and accessibility on the part of the leader.

Self-analytical, examining every less -than-optimum outcome.

Putting the needs of the club ahead of personal ambition.

Disciplined tending to the needs of the enterprise will bring about better performance.

Take Away: Having an outward focus on others, putting the needs of the club first, being open and accessible to constituents, and being willing to examine less-than-optimum outcomes will help you become an effective Service-Based Leader, bringing success to you and your club.

The Soft Stuff

“Roger Enrico, former chairman at Pepsico, famously said, ‘**The soft stuff is always harder than the hard stuff.**’ As one who has worked in hospitality leadership roles for over thirty-five years, I would say that truer words were never spoken. In the detail and people rich environment of the hospitality business, it is the absence of well-developed ‘soft’ skills at all levels of organizations that create our greatest challenges.

So what are we really talking about when we speak of the soft stuff? In short, it’s the people skills – those aptitudes and abilities used to get the best out of our human assets. It encompasses all of those things we talk about when discussing leadership – the highly nuanced interactions with a diverse workforce that result in motivation, morale, enthusiasm, focus, commitment, initiative, productivity, teamwork, organizational cohesiveness, and group success.

So what are some very real things that you can do to improve the soft stuff at your club? Here are three basics:

- **Leadership training for all managers** to ensure they understand the absolute importance of leadership in all they do. The ongoing example and performance of your leadership team is **THE** most important driver of your club’s success.
- **Well-defined organizational values and constantly reinforced service culture** are an absolute must. Without clearly articulated values and club culture, your efforts to provide high levels of service to your membership will certainly fail.
- **Training, training, and more training** is a bedrock requirement in the hospitality industry. There’s just too much that needs to be done right every day by everyone on your staff to leave the details to chance.

The ‘hard stuff’ – the buildings, golf course, and other amenities are certainly important to a successful club experience. But without the soft stuff they are just expensive shells and monuments, lacking in the reassuring warmth and human touch that is at the heart of hospitality and service.”

Ed Rehkopf, What I Expect from My Club Management Team

Discussion Points: Have your managers talk about some of the challenges of developing the “soft stuff” at your club. What are some specific things that could be done to improve the soft stuff so it’s not so hard?

Take Away: Develop the skills of a Service-Based Leader, create and reinforce a culture of service, and train constantly and consistently to master the “Soft Stuff.”

#17

Service-Based Leadership and Employee Empowerment

“It has been said that leadership is situational and that there is an optimum style of leadership for every profession – from politician, to general, to doctor, to professor, to hospitality manager. The skills and abilities that make a person successful in one setting do not necessarily translate well to another. The hard-charging, tough-as-nails, cigar-chomping leadership persona of a charismatic military leader will not work well in the mixed gender, multi-ethnic, and transient workforce of the service industry. Unlike a soldier, if a hotel or restaurant worker isn’t comfortable with her boss’s leadership, she’ll just go somewhere else.

The very term ‘service industry’ gives hint to the necessary service-based leadership style for hospitality managers where the people- and detail-intensive work environment requires open and thorough communication and training, as well as high levels of motivation and morale. Certainly, one cannot expect employees to consistently provide service to a club’s members and guests if they are not properly served by the leadership and example of their bosses.

The aim of Service-Based Leadership is to empower employees at all levels to think and act in alignment with your club’s values as they serve the needs of members. Ultimately, Service-Based Leadership is the foundation upon which empowerment is built. It provides the necessary trust, training, and confidence for employees to take the initiative.”

Ed Rehkopf, What I Expect from My Club Management Team

Discussion Points: Discuss how the following elements of Service-Based Leadership foster a sense of employee empowerment:

- Open, accessible leaders.
- Constant communication.
- Recognizing the ultimate value of people in all you do.
- Continually recognizing employees.
- Open flow of ideas, opinions, and information.
- Problem discovery and solution is a focus while placing blame is unimportant.

Take Away: The first step to realizing employee empowerment at your club is to implement a consistent understanding and application of Service-Based Leadership throughout the management staff.

#22

Relationships and Leadership

Teachable Moments

“John C. Maxwell, author of the bestselling *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, says that the definition of leadership is influence. While it is, first and foremost, the ability to influence followers, it also requires that the leader influence those people who make up any and all constituencies.

Influence is derived from the relationships you create with your followers and other constituents. How you act and interact with others is the basis for your success as a leader. The quality of your relationships will determine your outcomes. But you must understand that each of your followers and constituents is a unique individual with different needs and motivations. What may work with one may fail miserably with another. But the art of relationships can be learned. Generally speaking, while it requires experience, judgment, a measure of sensitivity to the needs of others, and a fair degree of emotional maturity, the ability to form and sustain meaningful relationships improves with age.

Developing leadership, or relationship skills, is a cumulative process. It’s why Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great, Why Some Companies Make the Leap . . . and Others Don’t*, proposes the Level 5 Hierarchy leading to the consummate Level 5 Leader. It is why potential leaders must be identified early, why young managers must be trained in the skills of leadership, and why such skills should be nurtured and shaped with each increase in responsibility and each step of the career ladder.

Creating and sustaining meaningful relationships is at the heart of Service-Based Leadership. The extent to which you are able to develop those relationships early in your career will have a great bearing on your future success—but not only in your career. The bonus is that in developing Service-Based Leadership skills, you develop the skills to form meaningful relationships in other areas of your life.”

Ed Rehkopf, Leadership on the Line – The Workbook

Discussion Points: Discuss what it means to influence someone. What are some of the ways that your managers must influence their employees? Their boss? Other constituencies? Explain the difference in a leader’s relationship with her boss, her employees, and the members of the club.

Take Away: The ability to influence others is the essence of leadership.

The Hierarchy of Service

“While Service-Based Leadership stresses that the leader must serve the needs of his or her constituencies, not all constituent needs have equal weight or importance.

Owners or shareholders are usually the smallest constituent group in numbers, but their needs are paramount. Why? Because it is their capital that has been invested in the enterprise and their need for return on investment that permits the continuation of the business. If it is not making a profit, if it cannot gain credit based on a potential for future profit, if it cannot meet its cash needs for payroll or to pay vendors, it will quickly go out of business and the needs of all other constituencies will become irrelevant.

Next in order of importance are the needs of **customers (or members)**. Without sufficient customers patronizing the business, it will not be profitable or viable. If not viable, it will not last long – and all constituencies lose. Ultimately, customers are attracted by price and the quality of products and services. Taken together, quality and price create a sense of value – the value perceived by customers. If enough customers perceive value, they will frequent the enterprise to spend their money and will make it successful. If not, the business will ultimately fail.



The service-based organizational model depicts the importance of satisfying customers, as well as the important role of employees. The organization's leaders are placed at the bottom, clearly emphasizing their role in serving the needs of all constituencies.

This statement brings us to our third constituency – **the employees**. They are the ones who execute the owners' vision for quality of product and service. They are the ones whose daily interaction with customers creates the value customers seek. Properly led, valued, and supported, employees will enthusiastically commit to serving the business' customers thereby fostering levels of business that enable it to thrive.”

Ed Rehkopf, Leadership on the Line – The Workbook

Discussion Points: Discuss the relationship of the club's three primary constituencies and the priority of their needs. Discuss the relative levels of authority and influence leaders have over these constituencies.

Take Away: Service-Based Leaders serve all constituencies, but there is a hierarchy for that service.

#41 *Consistent Club-Wide Leadership*

Teachable Moments

“Management teams can be dysfunctional for a host of reasons, but there is none so basic as a variety of leadership styles. To expect that any group of managers, each with his own background, training, and experience, will have a similar effective leadership style is unrealistic.

Yet as with so many other aspects of management, consistency is essential to faithfully communicate and reinforce the club’s culture, service ethic, and environment for employee empowerment. Without leadership consistency, employees get a mixed service message, and their morale and commitment varies from manager to manager and department to department.

Imagine a management team made up of department heads with the following leadership styles:

- Military – with its requirement of absolute, immediate, and unquestioned obedience,
- Democratic – where decisions are only made after lengthy discussion and debate,
- Gunslinger – with its emphasis on shoot first, aim later,
- Absent – where the leader is never around or is hiding in his office,
- From another planet – where the leader expects that everyone will know what to do and will do it without being told,
- Uncommunicative – where the leader gives everyone the silent treatment,
- Teed off – where the manager is angry all the time at everyone,
- Political – where the manager believes his only function is to suck up to members or owners, and
- Service-based – where the attitude and primary motivation of the leader is service to others – to members, to employees, to owners or board.

Clearly, such a jumble of leadership styles will lead to a confusing and contradictory example and message to employees, as well as create barriers to cooperation and teamwork between departments. The solution to such a fragmented workplace is for the general manager to promote a consistent style and application of leadership club-wide. This can only be done by providing consistent leadership training to the entire management team. Given the uneven comprehension of leadership issues among any group of managers, the benefits of a uniform understanding and application of leadership will bring club operations to a uniformly high state of performance.”

Ed Rehkopf, What I Expect from My Club Management Team

Discussion Points: Discuss how the above listed leadership style may impact followers and why a variety of styles within a club management team contributes to uneven and inconsistent employee performance.

Take Away: A consistent leadership style across the entire management team is necessary for success in group endeavors.

The 100/0 Principle

“Al Ritter has written a great little book, *The 100/0 Principle*, subtitled *The Secret of Great Relationships*. While this may sound like any one of the score of self-help books published annually, one merely has to look at Mr. Ritter’s resume – MBA from Dartmouth, marketing and operations positions with Pepsico, CFO at Swift and Company, Senior VP for Citigroup, consulting for Accenture, and founding his own consulting company – to recognize that this short, simple, and easy-to-read book holds much promise for business leaders in any setting and level of organizational hierarchies.

I believe the simple concept at the heart of this book is arguably the single most important guarantor of success in any relationship, certainly in the personal arena, but beyond that in any organization or business enterprise. Such well-known leadership authors as John C. Maxwell, Brian Tracy, and Warren Blank have all recognized the central role of relationships in any attempt to lead. As Maxwell said, ‘People who are unable to build solid, lasting relationships will soon discover that they are unable to sustain long, effective leadership.’

What Mr. Ritter so strikingly advocates in his book is that if you want any relationship to be successful, you must take 100% responsibility for the outcome while expecting nothing in return. While this statement may seem shocking to some, I believe it is counter-intuitive wisdom of the highest order. To examine why, consider the following statements relating to leadership:

- A leader is responsible for his own success.
- A leader is responsible for everything her organization does or fails to do.
- In a free society, all but the most socially or economically disadvantaged followers have choice and can go elsewhere.
- Meaningful relationships are based on trust.
- Followers don’t automatically extend their trust to a leader; it must be earned.
- As the one with the power and authority, the leader must take responsibility for establishing trust.
- If, for whatever reason, a relationship with followers is not going well, a leader cannot expect or wait for others to fix it.
- Therefore, he or she must take full responsibility for the relationship.”

Ed Rehkopf, What I Expect from My Club Management Team

Discussion Points: Discuss the points above and how they lead inescapably to the conclusion that a leader is 100% responsible for the relationship with followers and how they respond to his leadership.

Take Away: The only person responsible for successful relationships with followers is the leader.

Managers' Code of Ethics – 1

“In an ideal world we could trust everyone to do the right things, but such a world does not exist. The unfortunate fact is that if we don’t train our management team to a common standard of professional behavior, some will transgress. And this is of primary importance because if we as managers and leaders don’t set an unimpeachable example, we can expect our employees to cut ethical corners as well.

Here is a list of professional expectations for managers and supervisors at all levels of club operations:

- As a representative of the club for whom I work, I understand that my actions and behavior, both at and away from work, reflect on the organization that provides my employment. I will, therefore, do everything in my power to represent them faithfully and professionally in all my dealings with members, guests, employees, vendors, and the community at large.
- I will organize the work areas for which I am responsible and thoroughly train the employees I supervise to ensure the most efficient operation with the highest levels of service possible.
- I will not use or remove club property for personal use and will protect the assets and resources of the club as if they were my own. My vigilance and example will ensure the employees I supervise do likewise.
- I understand that my leadership and example set the standard for my employees. I understand that a manager who shirks responsibilities, cuts corners, fails to give an honest time commitment, pilfers food and supplies, fails to secure inventories, or is not personally productive in time or commitment, can expect his or her employees to do the same.
- I will not exchange club goods or services for personal favors or services from members, non-members, or vendors. Further, I will not accept personal favors, gifts, or rebates from vendors in any form. Such items benefit me at my employer’s expense and are appropriately considered kickbacks. My only interest is to get the best price for my place of business and I will make every effort to do so by seeking competitive pricing from several vendors.”

Ed Rehkopf, What I Expect from My Club Management Team

Discussion Points: Discuss each of the points above to ensure managers understand the full implications of these important matters.

Take Away: Ethical standards are at the very heart of what you do – your personal and professional integrity. Follow the spirit as well as the letter of ethical requirements and set an unassailable example of conduct for those you lead and serve.

About the Author

Ed Rehkopf is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and received a Masters of Professional Studies degree in Hospitality Management from Cornell's School of Hotel Administration. During his long and varied career, he has managed two historic, university-owned hotels, managed at a four-star desert resort, directed operations for a regional hotel chain, opened two golf and country clubs, worked in golf course development, and launched a portal web site for the club industry.

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