

## Be a Person of Influence!

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### *5 Leadership Principles to Help You Move UP the Ladder*

Distinguish yourself from the rest of the pack, not by leading laterally or down, but by leading UP... supporting *your* leader, adding value to the organization, and taking on more responsibility.

Show your leader that you:

- **Have the ability to self-manage.**
- **Can handle more responsibility.**
- **Think like a leader, and understand your role in the organization.**
- **Are prepared for every meeting.**
- **Strive to be better every day.**

Learning how to lead up AND lead yourself takes some forethought, consistency, and careful preparation. Let these five principles guide you.

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## **#1. Manage Yourself.**

Nothing makes a more lasting impression on your leader than your ability to manage yourself. By doing this - and doing it well - you demonstrate that you are confident, in control, and more importantly, able to maximize opportunities that will move you and your organization ahead.

To learn how to manage yourself, focus on the following areas.

- **Control your emotions.**

Nobody - especially your leader - likes to spend time with lawyers who can't manage their own emotions. People who know how to self manage know when to display emotions and when to hide them.

- **Manage your time.**

In order to value yourself, you must value your time and what you do with it.

In *The 360-Degree Leader*, leadership guru, John C. Maxwell, suggests that instead of thinking about what you do and how much money you must make, think more in terms of time. In other words, ask yourself... what is worth spending your my life on? According to Maxwell, "Seeing your work in that light just may change the way you manage your time."

- **Prioritize based on your strengths.**

Focus first on work that you do well. If feasible, the bulk of your time at the office should be spent doing things that utilize your strengths.

You will never be able to do everything exceptionally well. Commit to being a specialist who focuses on a few strong areas.

## **#2. Lift your leader's load... without sucking up.**

Before you wince at the thought of taking on even more responsibility, think about the responsibility that weighs even heavier on your leader.

Help lift your leader's load.

Taking on more responsibility will increase your value to your boss and will build your influence within the organization. Your leaders will feel better off because you are a part of the team. Your value will skyrocket - and so will your influence.

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One more note about this principle. Lifting your leader's load is not sucking up. Your motives should be genuine, not overtly self-serving.

### **#3. Think like a leader.**

Here's where the definitions of management and leadership come into play.

**Managers** make sure work is getting done or that a process is being carried out. Leaders work with *people*. They communicate, form relationships, think strategically, visualize, and take action.

### **#4. Be prepared.**

Since time is so precious, it is crucial that you are prepared when you take any of your leader's time. There are a couple ways you can do this.

First, try not to frustrate your leader with too many ill-thought out questions.

Second, bring something to the table - always. Your leader highly values people who are creative and who can take a basic idea and run with it, making it even better.

### **#5. Strive to be better every day!**

You may be good at what you do, but if you are not stretching to be even better, you will stagnate. Accept the necessity for growth and the feelings of discomfort that are inevitable, but necessary. As your capabilities grow so will your influence.

### **Conclusion**

If you want to influence the people at the top, keep getting better. Professional and personal growth will demonstrate that you are invested in your career, you can adapt to change and - even better - you are worth promoting!

Only you hold the key to your own success. Use that key to unlock your leadership potential. Show your leaders what you are made of - and do it now!

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