

What is Leadership

And What it Means to Us

Brian Dabe – Regional President

“As a leader... I have always endeavored to listen to what each and every person in a discussion had to say before venturing my own opinion. Oftentimes, my own opinion will simply represent a con-sensus of what I heard in the discussion. I always remember the axiom: a leader is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realizing that all along they are being directed from behind.”

- Nelson Mandela

I think this quote really embodies what Phi Theta Kappa is all about. It shows us that as leaders we have to take in the opinions of others before venturing our own and the final outcome is truly a reflection of the group and that a good leader inspires others to lead.

“The manager administers; the leader innovates. The manager has a short-range view; the leader has a long-range perspective. The manager asks how and when; the leader asks what and why. The manager has his eye on the bottom line; the leader has his eye on the horizon. The manager accepts the status quo; the leader challenges it.”

- Warren Bennis

I think this quote speaks for itself and is something every aspiring leader should read. In the business world managers are often considered to be leaders and this quote shows us that it's not always true. As leaders we must ask ourselves do we want to manage or do we want to lead.

Jason Fatzinger – Regional Vice President

“The leaders who work most effectively, it seems to me, never say 'I'. And that's not because they have trained themselves not to say 'I'. They don't think 'I'. They think 'we'; they think 'team'. They understand their job to be to make the team function. They accept responsibility and don't sidestep it, but 'we' gets the credit.... This is what creates trust, what enables you to get the task done.”

- Peter F. Drucker

All Phi Theta Kappans know that is not only good leadership but team work that gets the job done. I believe this quote speaks to the heart of team work and of its leadership. Without thinking “we” the system seems to fail and if all we think is “I”, no matter how good the cause the desired effect will not be achieved.

“A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.”

- Lao Tzu

This quote echoes the way in which I lead and it also depicts two characteristic I believe a good leader should embody; the characteristic of selflessness and allowing the whole team to take credit and a coaching mentality not over powering or directing but guiding and assisting the team.

Aminata Seck – Regional Secretary/ Ohio News Letter Editor

"The art of communication is the language of leadership."

-James Humes

I choose this quote because as a team, conflicts don't occur, miscommunication does. Sometimes someone we normally harmonize well with may be out of tune just on a random day. Such a pattern of miscommunication doesn't have to be taken too seriously. It's just one of those days when interactions are blocked due to frictional celestial transitions. If we simply put off any important interactions, we will find the climate will even itself out in a day or two or even the same exact day!, and from there we can resume important matters then. Also one should never make an assumption based on something they have heard, or bits of information they have gathered. Neither do they make any kind of judgment or come to any kind of conclusion until they have gathered all the facts.

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."

- John Quincy Adams

The more your actions are being an example to other people, the more you have to actually go above the expected and beyond your leadership skills in order to help them escalate as well. Great actions are composed of small deeds and are designed to benefit you as well as uplift the nature of others. Many leaders did not succeed because of their personality but because of their ability to give voice to an ideal, an ideal which stirred within people's hearth and made them believe that a better and much successful life was possible. And even though you (the leader) have reached your limit with certain people and a certain situation that has been going on, you must acknowledge to yourself that it is temporary. This simple recognition should fill you with a sense of peace and determination to preserve because you have so much power and influence at your disposal. You always have to remember to, keep in mind that you need to fully integrate yourself and completely invest your passion and your positive thoughts into your actions as you move through the process of preparing for an important endeavor if you are to convince someone else of its value and competence to tackle the obstacles.

Paul Saltz – Central District Representative

"You may never know what results come of your action, but if you do nothing, there will be no result."

- Mahatma Gandhi

I chose this quote because as leaders we need to not forget about tangible results. Vision will only carry an organization so far but eventually you need to actually fulfill it. The quote also reminds us that we cannot be fearful of taking a course of action. Sometimes the concept of not knowing every detail can paralyze us so badly that we fail to take any action at all. Many times a leader must be prepared to have the organization take a risk and simply step out into the unknown. Even though it can be uncomfortable to do so, it is sometimes the only way we will grow.

"The task of the leader is to get his people from where they are to where they have not been."

- Henry Kissinger

This quote is related to the first. Leaders are to provide long range vision for continual growth of an organization. This means they are never to settle for the status quo. Every so often organizations get stuck in very comfortable ruts. So much so that the individuals can not even contemplate the possibility of doing anything else. It is at these junctures where the leader needs to be prepared to shake things up a bit and have the courage to set a new course for the organization. This could range anywhere from taking on a new project or participating in a new program to changing policies and procedures to ones which are more efficient. The important point is to not remain or get stagnant.

April Rousell – Northeastern District Representative

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."

-John Quincy Adams

I chose this quote because it represents leading by example. A leadership position is not a position of power, it is a position that allows you to inspire others to grow and become a better person.

"A great leader's courage to fulfill his vision come from passion, not position."

-John Maxwell

This quote reminds us of the impact that one's passion can make on a situation. Passion come from the heart, positions are most often appointed. My passion for this organization has changed my life, and I hope that passion will flow through me and in order to change others' lives.

Patty Lewis – Southwestern District Representative

"A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be."

- Rosalynn Carter

I chose this quote because it says a lot about different times in my life. During my teen years there were a lot of opportunities that I could have taken to better myself and make my life easier but I chose to ignore those opportunities and do what I wanted. I failed out of my honors classes and almost failed seventh grade because I wasn't doing what I "ought to be." Looking back now, the person that inspired me most to make a change and get back on honor roll was my sixth grade teacher and mentor, Mr. Shindell. He is everything a great leader and teacher should be. He knew that I was making bad choices and helped me to see the error of my ways and to change them for the better.

"The task of leadership is not to put greatness into people, but to elicit it, for the greatness is there already."

~ John Buchanan

I believe that not everyone is born a leader but that everyone is born with some greatness in them. There is a saying that "No one can do everything, but everyone can do something." I think that if we encourage people to do the things we know they would be great at even if they may not realize it. Sometimes people do not realize what they are capable of until they do it. I didn't think I was capable of going to college and finishing with honors, but I am doing it. My greatness was there, I just didn't realize it. Being part of Phi Theta Kappa has elicited my greatness and helped me to become a stronger person who feels ready to take on anything.