Developing Authentic Leadership

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Authentic Leadership, M Crawford Heitzmann, GSW Paris 2014
What is leadership?

Leadership is "a process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task".

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Is there a recipe for leadership?

- establish a clear vision
- share that vision with others so that they will follow willingly
- provide the information, knowledge, and methods to realize that vision
- coordinate and balance the conflicting interests of all team members and stakeholders.

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How to become a leader in four simple lessons?

- Not possible.
- Unlike management, leadership cannot be taught.
- But it can be developed in an accelerated way, or enhanced through coaching and mentoring.

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How to recognise a leader?

- A leader **steps up** in times of crisis, and is able to **think and act creatively** in difficult situations.
- Leaders have **followers**, who adopt their **ideas**, help achieve their **vision**.

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Why do people follow leaders?

- Because they trust them
- Because they respect them
- Because they believe that they will take them to a better place
- Because they are excited by their ideas and identify with their vision

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Authentic leadership

- Authentic leadership is a sort of natural resonance, which is brought to life in a crucible of real life experience, suffering, and humility.
- That «natural resonance » is what empowers a leader’s communication.

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Real life experience

- **Accept responsibility**, as young as possible.
- Deliver on commitments ([entrepreneur](#)).
- Understand what «[devil in the details](#)» means (empathy, respect).
- Feel what it is to be the last one standing, who has to deliver (perseverance).
- Study the people around you, in the team. What are their motivations?

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Suffering

- Life’s worst experiences are often the most important for shaping who you are.
- Spend time in the desert. Eyes on the horizon, one foot in front of the other.
- Eleanor Roosevelt, Nelson Mandela, Ghandi – visions formed by periods of solitude and suffering
- «Subjugating» own comfort to a higher cause.

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Humility

- Leaders are **not better** than the others.
- **Respect followers.** The world needs more followers than leaders.
- No matter how knowledgeable you are, you can always **learn ten things** from the person in front of you in the metro.
- **Listen twice as much as you talk.** Hear the messages, distill the meaning.

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Honesty

- Keep communication real with your teams, based on fact and potential.
- Keep old friends who will challenge you, keep you grounded.
- Don’t get sucked into hype
- Challenge yourself to regular reality checks – get out of your comfort zone (eg - change country, language, métier...)

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Resonant Communication

- Communication that resonates with those listening, because it **taps into the listeners’ own emotional needs.**
  - Need to be **recognised** (ideas heard)
  - Need to **exist** (reassurance, future)
  - Need to feel in **control** (feel part of action)
  - Need for **security** (protection, navigation)

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Authentic leadership

- **Founded in real expertise**, real experience, real value-added (credibility)
- **Built up with values** which stress the common interest over personal ego (trust)
- **Tested and renewed everyday**, by «walking the talk», »staying humble and available, listening (relevance)

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