

Eight Laws of Leadership 602.5

Take a look around. Business, education, politics. If there's one thing we don't have enough of, it's good leaders – men and women who have the vision and ability to change things for the better.

Former Air Force general William Cohen wrote a fine book called *The Stuff of Heroes* in which he identified eight laws of leadership:

1. Maintain absolute integrity.
2. Know your stuff.
3. Declare your expectations.
4. Show uncommon commitment.
5. Expect positive results.
6. Take care of your people.
7. Put duty before self.
8. Get out in front.

His laws embrace important competencies like knowledge, communication skills, commitment, optimism, caring, and a powerful sense of duty. But General Cohen also recognized that the foundation of a successful leader is character, including trustworthiness, honour, and courage.

The best leaders draw on these moral qualities to influence others through inspiration, persuasion, trust, and loyalty. They do the right thing despite the costs and risks. They do it not because it will yield approval or advantage but because it's the right thing.

In these cynical times, it's easy to think such leadership is unattainable; yet in every walk of life there are countless men and women – parents, teachers, coaches, civic activists – who fit this mold. What's more important, every one of us could be among them.

This is Michael Josephson reminding you that character counts.

What Do You Make? 620.5

During a dinner party, a self-important business executive said, “The problem with our education system starts with teachers. What can our kids learn from people who decided their best option in life was to become a teacher? Those who can, do. Those who can’t, teach.”

A guest protested, “I’ve been a teacher for 20 years, and that’s simplistic and unfair.”

“Really?” the executive said. “Then be honest, what do you make?”

“I suppose you’re thinking of money,” the teacher replied. “I earn enough, but let me tell you what I make.

“I make other people’s children read, think, write, wonder, and talk about important things such as the world and their role in it.

“I make them appreciate the value of education, not simply as a way to make a living, but as a way to make a life.

“I make them work harder than they want to and accomplish more than they thought possible.

“I encourage them to be sceptical without being cynical and optimistic without being naïve.

“I make them understand that the quality of their life will be determined by their choices, and I make them take responsibility for their actions.

“I make them feel proud, capable, and worthy when they try hard.

“I make them appreciate the importance of integrity and honour in a world that too often shows little regard for either.

“I make them respect themselves and treat others with respect.

“I make them feel proud and grateful to live in America where people are entitled to be treated fairly and with respect and judged by their accomplishments and character, not by their colour, creed, or size of their bank account.

“Most of all, I make a difference.

“So now,” the teacher said to the executive, “tell us what *you* make?”

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