

SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test is: do those served grow as persons: do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or at least, not be further deprived?

The Servant as Leader
Robert K. Greenleaf

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Servant leadership seeks to involve others in decision making, is strongly based in ethical and caring behavior and enhances the personal growth of workers while improving the caring and quality of organizational life.

TEN CHARACTERISTICS OF A SERVANT-LEADER

1. **LISTENING** Although communication and decision making skills are important for the servant-leader, they need to be reinforced by a deep commitment to listening intently to others.
2. **Empathy:** The servant-leader strives to understand and empathize with others.
3. **Healing:** The healing of relationships is a powerful force for transformation and integration. Servant-leaders recognize that they have an opportunity to help make whole those with whom they come in contact.
4. **Awareness:** General awareness and especially self-awareness strengthens the servant-leader.
5. **Persuasion:** The servant-leader relies on persuasion rather than on authority in making decisions within an organization.
6. **Conceptualization:** Servant-leaders seek to nurture their abilities to dream great dreams, to think beyond day-to-day realities.
7. **Foresight:** The ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation is important.
8. **Stewardship:** Servant leaders hold their institutions in trust for the greater good of society.
9. **Commitment to the growth of people:** Servant-leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. Servant-leaders are committed to the growth of each individual within his or her organization
10. **Building Community:** The servant-leader seeks to identify some means for building community among those who work within a given institution.

Interest in the meaning and practice of servant-leadership continues to grow. Servant-leadership characteristics often occur naturally within many individuals; and like many natural tendencies, they can be enhanced through learning and practice. Servant-leadership offers great hope for the future in creating better, more caring, institution.

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