



Key Elements of Leadership

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I was listening to the radio the other night and John Tesh said that a high school senior he knew of had polled 150 CEO's and asked them to name the key characteristics of an effective leader. I thought the answers were thought provoking and I wanted to share them with you. The four answers that were most prevalent were these:

- 1) **Passion:** You simply can't become successful at something you can't get excited about. This may seem foreign to many of us. We think that when we go to work we have to leave the passion of our younger lives behind, but according to these leaders this is not the case.
- 2) **Respect:** You have to have respect for the people you work with if you wish to motivate them. No one wants to work for someone who does not make them feel special. I think another word for this is humility. The leader has to feel that every member of the organization is critical to its success.
- 3) **Curiosity:** These leaders felt that the best leaders never feel that they have the answers. They are endlessly curious about how to do things better. This mentality is supported by Peter Senge's research in his book *The Fifth Discipline* that found that organizations that have a learning mentality are the ones that stand the test of time.
- 4) **Honesty:** Probably the most important quality of all. No one wants to follow someone we do not trust. Sometimes we may feel that leaders get where they are because they cut corners on integrity, but in my experience those types of leaders don't last.