



# The GIFTS of Great Leadership

by Mark McCatty

## GREAT LEADERS BRING GIFTS

At this time of year with the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, our thoughts turn to gift giving. But, gifts aren't just for family members. Great leaders bring GIFTS to their organizations, too! A leader cares about the employees in his or her organization and recognizes their contribution. As a result, the leader has a positive impact on the organization and its people. The **GIFTS** a great leader brings are:



- ◆ **G**      **Goals**
- ◆ **I**      **Inspiration**
- ◆ **F**      **Focus**
- ◆ **T**      **Teamwork**
- ◆ **S**      **Success**

**GOALS** – One of the most important gifts a great leader can bring is the ability to set, manage and exceed goals. When goals are appropriately set, managed and then exceeded, employees feel as if they are making progress on work issues and are making improvements within the organization. There is momentum generated to tackle the hard issues.

**INSPIRATION** – Leaders who can inspire make us feel we can do more and be more. A great leader will take time with people, listen to questions, and provide answers and support. The effective leader truly cares about people and inspires employees to care about the organization, too.

**FOCUS** – Great leaders provide clear, consistent and focused communications to all stakeholders. With focused communication, there is no mistaking the goal and what needs to happen to achieve the goal. There's power in the alignment of effort that comes from focus. People have a clear understanding of the critical tasks that are required, they've seen the gains being made, and they feel motivated and inspired to pursue the goals.

**TEAMWORK** – Great leaders move us from “me” to “we”. There’s a connectedness between people and effective, cross-functional communication comes easy. People work respectfully toward common goals. When there are difficulties, the leader will model positive behaviors by pulling people together to analyze and solve tough problems, rather than allowing people to separate themselves into cliques and talk about each other.

**SUCCESS** – A great leader leads the organization to success. It’s the power of “we” that achieves great things. It is always amazing when someone can rise up and lead a group of people to accomplish **together** what seems unattainable for individuals working alone. The gift a good leader gives the organization is the ability to create a shared vision, a belief in that vision, and then empower employees to make the vision a reality.

### THE GIFT OF LEADERSHIP

Another GIFT great leaders can bring to their organization is their leadership style. Good leaders are obsessed with their **vision**, they hold people **accountable**, and they give people the benefit of **feedback**.



People within the organization should understand the leader’s vision. They need to understand the goals they should strive for to help achieve this vision. There should be a strong leadership system in place to provide support and direction and there should be positive reinforcement for positive action. It should be easy to do right thing and hard to do wrong thing.

In some circles, holding people accountable has come to be viewed as negative, when in fact it is exactly the opposite. Have you ever seen what driving a car with no oil does to an engine? Mechanics will tell you that it happens more often than you might think. But how does it happen? Most times the engine blows because the owner neglected to hold himself accountable by checking the oil level. Without this checking, or holding accountable, the engine fails, the car fails, and ultimately the owner fails to get where they want to go.



In much the same way, a leader will check in and hold employees accountable. Monitoring your employees’ actions and initiating discussions with them is an act of concern. When a good leader checks in, what they find determines whether they take action and hold people accountable, or just allow things to continue as before. The leader who cares about people takes the time be involved and holds employees accountable when changes are needed.

Lastly, great leaders give feedback. It takes a true leader to care enough about a person to offer insights and suggestions. Many people act or communicate in ways that are unintended. They inadvertently cause bad feelings and hurt relationships. When a good leader comes across this situation, he or she will provide feedback and then become the mirror for that individual to see the correct way to approach issues.

Whether that individual is a peer, boss, or team member, the good leader cares enough to offer an outside view. The leader does not force their point; they merely share a perspective and reflect the appropriate behavior. When others see the pure spirit of the feedback, they don't respond negatively.

So this holiday, bring the GIFTS of good leadership and a positive leadership style to your organization. Happy Holidays!