

The Power of Humility

PV Ramana Murthy

PV is a Mumbai based consultant to CEOs. PV worked with the Coca Cola Company and Indian Hotels, part of the Tata Group. He is a HR thought leader.

Customer centricity is all about placing customer's interests ahead of the organization and enduring exceptional service to the customers.

Robert K Greenleaf coined the concept of “servant leadership’ in 1970. He wrote

“ The servant leader is a servant first, it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve , to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead”

The ten most important characteristics of a servant leader are – listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, people growth and building communities.

Another characteristic that indicates the absence of humble leadership is hype. When leaders create a façade around their actions, there is little transparency.

The attitudinal characteristics of humble leaders are:

Appreciative Mindset

Positive about possibilities

Path showing

Lightheartedness

Evolutionary frame of mind

APPLE is the acronym

The five behavioral characteristics, labeled IMAGE are:

Intensity

Mindful excellence

Ahead of one's time

Gratitude

Establishing emotional connect

An appreciative mindset amongst humble leaders has three distinct attributes :

Curiosity

Purpose

Co - creation

Positive possibilities are about

Integrative emotion

Realistic Optimism

Identifying opportunities in adversity

Humble leaders are not overtly optimistic. As leaders they dream big, but because of their sense of responsibility to others, they move ahead with caution, care, preparation and proper execution.

Humble leaders believe in the strengths and potential of other people and this enables them to take bold steps.

Even when they are down, morale is low, humble leaders believe that its their duty and responsibility to cheer up their teams.

Good leaders will always take active interest in the growth and success of those who work with and for them. They do this by constantly testing the skill sets of employees.

Humble leaders attitudinal characteristics is
the ability to distinguish

Person and problem

Effort over outcomes

Treat mistakes as mistakes.

Leaders with intrinsic humility believe in the flexibility of thought and in taking decisions based on the continuous flow of information and inputs.

Humility helps leaders to consciously avoid feeling low after a failure

Most of us have grown up in a competitive environment

Change and challenge are the bywords of the 21 st century organization.

Humble leaders believe that they need to evolve constantly, he or she doesn't set out to be a leader but becomes one by sheer integrity of intent.

Attention and engagement are two key aspects of mindfulness that determine a leader's interaction with his/her team.

Mindful excellence has three attributes:

Singular focus

Relational management

Seeing tomorrow's reality today

Leaders need to have clarity on what goals need to be achieved by the team at a given point of time.

Humility makes leaders recognize the situation at hand which helps them to prioritize goals.

Great people give feedback to themselves.

Humility helps leaders temper any exaggerated notions of self worth they may have.

Adaptability is the ability to change to fit new circumstances

Gratitude is a social emotion that acknowledges and signals our recognition of what others have done for us.

Humble high achieving leaders recognize and appreciate, they do both simultaneously.

Candour means speaking honestly, openly and directly.

Not many may appreciate it, but brutal honesty does serve a purpose.

Humility may be an innate quality, but its not one that's inherited

We have infinite potential, we also have infinite capacity for self deception.

I think leadership and being human are intertwined

Life can be our biggest teacher if we can reflect on our experiences and learn from the experiences of others.