



5 HEROIC LEADERSHIP SKILLS

**PRESS START
LEADERSHIP**

PREFACE

There is an art to management and leadership. Whether you're managing people, a project or yourself, certain personality and behavioral attributes create a successful and effective leader or manager.

With over 20 years of experience leading and growing teams for top-tier digital creative companies, I decided to share what I've learned over the years with a wider audience.

PRESS START LEADERSHIP WAS BORN

As a coach in leadership, strategy, and execution for video game professionals, my commitment to improving my leadership with world-class coaches and programs gave me an edge in an industry that tends to neglect this learning. Instead, the industry promotes talented individuals with little background or experience in leadership, expecting extraordinary results.

To create better leaders, I want to share with you the five skills that make an effective and successful leader.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Leading by example is working the way you want your employees to work. It's essentially encompassing the phrase, 'practice what you preach.' Perhaps cliché, but the phrase reflects exactly what an employee expects when they are told how to deal with something in a certain way or given rules to follow.

Here are a few ways you can lead by example:

- **Avoid criticism:** Negativity breeds negativity, so provide constructive feedback rather than criticism.
- **Praise when it's due:** If your employee delivers great work, praise them. It's easy to forget to recognize excellent work. Be mindful.
- **Get in on the action:** There's no better way to lead by example than to actually do the work. This is one of the best ways to foster better relationships with employees and earn respect.

It's about showing your worth to your employees and earning that mutual respect. Your employees should look up to you to set expectations and lead by example.

“

**WE ALL MAKE
CHOICES, BUT IN
THE END OUR
CHOICES MAKE
US.**

ANDREW RYAN
BioShock (2004)

FOCUS ON THE SITUATION OR BEHAVIOR NOT THE PERS

02

Remove yourself on a personal level and look at the situation or behavior, rather than applying it to the person. This enables you to act on a situational rather than emotional level and removes any element of blame.

Instead of focusing on what could be wrong with the person, focus on the mistake as an opportunity to learn and prevent it from happening again. Give your employee invaluable experience on how to deal with and prevent problems.

While emotional intelligence and empathy are vital attributes for a leader, part of this intelligence is knowing when to remove yourself emotionally.

Act with your head and you will improve and strengthen your team.

“

**BE WISE.
BE SAFE.
BE AWARE.**

DR WALLACE BREEN

Half-Life 2 (2004)

TREAT OTHERS WITH RESPECT

In order to be an effective leader, you need to earn respect in a team environment and take time to connect with people at every level of your business.

You can only earn respect from others when you show them respect first. From time to time, roll up your sleeves and work at their level to help out. You'll understand the challenges they face in their role, which builds a two-way street of respect for the work you both do.

Whether you agree or disagree with a decision, argument or action, deliver feedback in a respectful way. It takes courage to share ideas. Trust and respect erode if workers feel undermined or taken for granted.

You want to create an inclusive and thriving workforce, and there's no better way of doing this than by respecting, developing and taking care of your team.

“

**A FAMOUS
EXPLORER ONCE
SAID, THAT THE
EXTRAORDINARY
IS IN WHAT WE
DO, NOT WHO WE
ARE.**

LARA CROFT
Tomb Raider (2013)

MAINTAIN TWO-WAY CONVERSATIONS THAT ARE OPEN AND HONEST

The power of listening and having two-way conversations is often taken for granted. Communicating with your colleagues, business partners and customers is key to being a successful leader.

As famously quoted by Stephen R. Covey, “Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.” This is where miscommunication and misunderstanding can arise. Be a great leader and follow by example to build a team of effective communicators and listeners.

To get the most out of a team, leaders must clearly communicate their goals, objectives and expectations. The ability to do this well results in the whole team working toward the same goal, rather than being misled by varying layers of communication.

BE OPEN AND HONEST

Being open and honest about your objectives, feedback and approach builds complete transparency between you and your team.

The ability to maintain a two-way conversation and listen is crucial to managing people and generating business.

“

**STAY AWHILE
AND LISTEN.**

DECKARD CAIN

Diablo 2 (2000)

TAKE IT UPON YOURSELF TO IMPROVE A SITUATION

You are a leader for a reason. It's your responsibility to solve problems, or support those solving problems, and make the best out of a situation. Support your peers in a respectful and empathetic way, and guide them to make better decisions moving forward.

Mistakes happen. We're all human. It's how we solve them that matters. Outline a strategy for problem-solving, and work as a team to identify where the issues came about and how they can be prevented for next time.

There is a resolution to every situation. You decide how you handle it, and that reflects onto your team. Inspire them to strive for positive outcomes.

“

**THE COURAGE TO
WALK INTO THE
DARKNESS, BUT
STRENGTH TO
RETURN TO THE
LIGHT.**

PARABLES OF THE ALLSPRING

Destiny (2014)

THE BOTTOM LINE

5 key actions to take away

- 1 Lead by example and show your worth to your employees.
- 2 Focus on the situation, rather than the person, and support the person by coming up with a solution together.
- 3 Respect others if you want respect. Respect is earned over time.
- 4 Be open, honest and transparent with your team.
- 5 Find the best outcome in every situation.

Take time to improve your knowledge and expertise with workshops, networking and courses.

What are you waiting for?

Press Start



WHO AM I?

I help leaders in the video game industry empower, enable, and grow those around them to be awesome.

If these leadership skills resonate with you and you would like to find out how I could help you become a better leader for the digital entertainment industry, get in touch today.



presstartleadership.com