

## “15 Essentials for Effective Leadership in the Body of Christ”

### 1. **Integrity**

It is right that leaders be held to the highest standards of character, conduct and ethics. The term encompasses honesty, authenticity, transparency, trustworthiness, truthfulness, morality, and personal ethics (Psalm 1; Prov. 4:14-18; 17:20; 20:7; 1 Tim. 3:1; Tit. 1:6; 3 John 12).

### 2. **Vision**

A leader must have the ability to “see into the future,” dream dreams and cast a vision for the people of God (Josh. 1; Prov. 29:18).

### 3. **Wisdom**

Why would anyone want to follow someone who is unwise and therefore incompetent? A wise leader seeks the mind of God (Prov. 19:21). We must feel confident that the leader knows where he is going, that he has the ability to take us there and that it is a place we also want to go. Competence includes demonstrating leadership ability through word, action and deed (Prov. 12:26; 13:16, 20; 15:1-2; 23:12, 23; 24:5-6).

### 4. **Communication**

We must develop the art of listening (Jam. 1:19). Input from key followers requires vital communication. A leader must clearly chart the course to follow to reach the vision. Talking, listening and sharing are crucial to sound leadership (Prov. 1:5, 7b; 11:14; 15:22-23; 21:23; 25:11-12).

### 5. **Motivation**

You must inspire followers to put forth the effort required to achieve the vision. Motivation by the leader is vital, because of the paralysis that can be caused by uncertainty. The status quo can look mighty comforting to followers who lack confidence in their leader. Change requires risk, challenge, and personal growth. Motivation requires inspirational leadership (Prov. 30:29-31).

### 6. **Decisiveness**

Leaders must make wise decisions. They must listen to counsel, observe for themselves, weigh the evidence, consider the consequences, and then act, always in a biblical manner. Every decision should be bathed in prayer, asking the Lord for wisdom (Jam. 1:5-7). Every decision will not be a perfect decision, but the leader must act decisively. To not decide in a timely manner, or to decide unpredictably or irrationally, is to display an uncertainty or inconsistency that will not be welcomed by those who are led. Followers will forgive the occasional wrong decision and remain loyal, but they will not long tolerate the leader’s inability or unwillingness to reach a decision (Jam. 1:8).

### 7. **Risk-taking**

Christian leadership is about attempting great things for God. It is about change, and change is about taking risks, being innovative, trying new approaches, and even risking failure. Leaders recognize “failure” as only a temporary setback that gives direction for how to proceed by providing clear evidence of how not to proceed. We fail when we don’t try. We fail only when we give up the pursuit for success (Matt. 25:14-30; Phil. 1:21; 3:12-14).

## **8. Compassion**

Leaders care about the mission of the organization, the vision that guides the way, and the well-being of the followers who must provide the hard work to translate the vision into reality. Leaders are passionate for ideals and compassionate for people (Prov. 3:27). True leaders are fair-minded and treat others as they would want to be treated (Prov. 14:21; 19:11; Matt. 22:39). We want to follow leaders whom we know to be not only competent but also genuinely concerned about us. The bond of good will and understanding that develops between a caring leader and his or her followers engenders the trust that is vital for effective leadership.

## **9. Humility**

Good leaders are marked by an accurate self-evaluation, which engenders humility of heart and openness to correction (Prov. 16:18; 18:12; 21:4; 22:4; 27:17; 29:23).

## **10. Self-control**

Capable leaders exhibit the ability to stay calm in the midst of stress and turbulence. They keep a “cool head” and a controlled tongue (Prov. 16:32; 23:29-35).

## **11. Balance**

Effective leaders have all elements of their being well-integrated - - - spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically (Luke 2:52). Such leaders may seem to be “larger than life” and often engender great loyalty among followers.

## **12. Humor**

Effective leaders take their work seriously but not themselves. A well-tuned sense of humor in a leader who is able and willing to laugh at his or her own mistakes and imperfections - - - but not those of their followers - - - makes the leader approachable and helps give others the confidence to take risks. The effective leader knows that a hearty laugh is medicine for the soul as well as the body and that in a crisis a good laugh may be the only link to sanity.

## **13. Service**

Wise leaders think of others before they think of themselves. They never ask anyone to do anything they would not be willing to do themselves. (Mark 10:45)

## **14. Sacrifice**

Effective and spiritual leaders give themselves away first to Jesus and then to others. They have an eternal perspective and recognize the value of giving up that which they cannot keep in order to gain that which they cannot lose. (Rom. 12:1)

## **15. Modeling**

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit” - - Aristotle (1 Cor. 11:1). Others learn more from what we do than what we say.