



THE EVEREST *Leadership Academy*

Learning from Lincoln Leadership Practices for School Success

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Introduction

- Abe Lincoln
 - Humble beginnings – one year of formal schooling
 - Many personal setbacks:
 - Mother died when he was 9 years old
 - Loss of two children
 - Bouts of depression throughout his life
 - Incomprehensible tragedy of the Civil War

“Lincoln represents the American Dream”



A Leadership Legacy

His life – possibility, humility, hope and leadership:

- ❑ The humblest could approach and feel at home in his presence
- ❑ Though deep, he was transparent
- ❑ Though strong, he was gentle
- ❑ Though decided and pronounced in his convictions, he was tolerant toward those who differed from him, and patient under reproaches

“The hard condition of his early life, which would have depressed and broken down weaker men, only gave greater life, vigor, and buoyancy to the heroic spirit of Abe Lincoln”



The 10 leadership Qualities and Skills

1. Implementing and sustaining a mission and vision with profound clarity
2. Communicating ideas effectively with straightforward language
3. Building a diverse and competent team to address the mission
4. Engendering trust, loyalty, and respect - humility and personal example
5. Leading and serving with emotional intelligence and empathy
6. Exercising situational competence – to implement effective change
7. Rising above personal trials through tenacity, resilience and courage
8. Exercising purposeful visibility
9. Demonstrating personal and enhanced competence
10. Believing that hope can become a reality



“Lincoln’s life serves as a context from which the book highlights the 10 leadership qualities and skills that he exhibited throughout his life”

“Leaders must find their own paths to success, exercising self-awareness and developing strengths, and working to improve weaknesses.”

“Lincoln’s life is inspirational because it represents hope”



#1 – Implementing and Sustaining a Mission and Vision with Profound Clarity

- First, you have to understand yourself because the hardest person you will ever have to lead is yourself
- Knowing what motivates oneself is a critical first step in the journey to create and realize a shared vision and mission
- Accomplishing great things requires character traits, qualities, and skills – empathy, humility, and ability to communicate

*“Lincoln displayed a paradoxical blend of personal humility
and professional will”*

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#2 – Communicating Ideas Effectively With Straightforward Language

- Storytelling can be a valuable leadership tool:
 - Stories speak to both parts of the human mind – its reason and emotion
 - Helps individuals think about and feel who they are, where they come from, and where they are headed
- Patient listening is very important
- The talk in hallways, elevators, parking lot, etc. are very revealing and informative

“ Precision in language, clarity, and the capacity to make an emotional connection were intentional communication strategies that Lincoln sought to develop throughout his life”



#3 – Building a Diverse and Competent Team to Successfully Address the Mission

- Lincoln knew what he didn't know
- He reached out to the brightest, experienced and most competent advisors
- Lincoln's genius was his ability to draw upon the talents of others, listening to their advise, recognizing that it was sometimes wiser than his own
- Lincoln instinctively understood his audience
- Casey Stengel (a baseball legend) once said, "Getting good players is easy. Getting'em to play together is the hard part"



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- Lincoln had a unique ability to bring together individuals with diverse personalities, ideas, and ambitions, and he was able to separate person from practice and to choose competence over personality
- You need to spend time building trust, rapport, and relationships with each other
- Thinking about the larger vision or mission first, and focusing on that as an outcome, then selecting individuals who collectively contribute both the hard and soft skills to realize the vision will serve this purpose well

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#4 – Engendering Trust, Loyalty, and Respect Through Humility, Humor, and Personal Example

- Competence counts. But what ultimately distinguishes the great leaders from the mediocre are the personal inner qualities.
- Everything about great leaders radiates from character – respect and trust
- Humility will make you approachable which is a strength and not a weakness
- Lincoln gained respect because he showed respect for others
- Four “vital signs” that foster relational trust: respect, personal regard, competence, and integrity



#5 – Leading and Serving with Emotional Intelligence and Empathy

- Goleman suggests that about 80 percent of adult success is based on emotional intelligence (EQ) which includes both personal and social competencies
- Soft skills (EQ) matter more than hard skills (IQ) where there is higher the intelligence barriers for entry into a field
- The five domains of EQ are: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills:
 - *Self-awareness – possess an accurate assessment of one's strengths and weaknesses*



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- *Self-regulation* – being able to manage emotions; to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods; the propensity to suspend judgment
- *Motivation* - high expectations; possess a strong drive for accomplishment even when confronted with failure; keep score of one's achievements
- *Empathy* – understanding the emotions of others and providing the skills to interact with others responsibly, according to their emotions

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- *Social skills* – they are interpersonal skills; the unique ability to read another person’s verbal or nonverbal cues and respond appropriately; skilled in networking

“Lincoln’s proclivity to move people emotionally led others by the example of both his behavior and his writings”



#6 – Exercising Situational Competence and Responding Appropriately to Implement Effective Change

- In the end it is not brilliance but judgement that separates the great leaders from the routine
- Thinking in new ways must occur and must include “changing attitudes, values, and behaviors”
- Lincoln’s flexibility and willingness to listen to voices on all sides of a debate enabled him to gain the knowledge necessary to act effectively

“Lincoln knew the importance of timing – sometimes slow to move, but once he did, going forward meant not looking back”

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#7 – Rising Beyond Personal and Professional Trials Through Tenacity, Persistence, Resilience, and Courage

- Lincoln had the patience and tenacity to teach himself
- He may have lacked a formal education and privilege, but his character impressed those who knew him best
- Resilience, conviction, and strength of will helped Lincoln recover from his depression
- The constructive response to disappointment or failure is called “resilience”

“Lincoln’s ability to face and rise to a challenge came from the personal narrative of his life. All his life Abraham Lincoln was tough-and tender”



#8 – Exercising Purposeful Visibility

- Leaders are shaped by the organizational culture and, in turn, help shape the culture when they get out and about. Lincoln’s visibility was intentional. His leadership approach was fueled by human engagement
- Lincoln was determined to interact daily with citizens. His strategy of keeping his face public let citizens know that he cared
- Lincoln knew his own story. He knew that those born without privilege must take action to change the course of their lives



#9 – Demonstrating Personal Growth and Enhanced Competence as a Lifelong Learner

- Effective leaders are “perpetual learners”
- Lincoln’s accomplishments were a “stunning work of self-education”
- Lincoln had many mentors along the way



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#10 – Believing That Hope Can Become a Reality

- Clarity and focus are not enough to implement successful change: hope must also be present
- If you have hope in an idea, your belief can lift up your spirits, providing the capacity and desire to fight and succeed

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Conclusion

“One of the most important elements of success will be how you lead by example. If the Lincoln legacy is about personal growth, then you can use the lessons of that legacy to find the passion to pursue your own growth”