

GOOD LEADERSHIP

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Just as good years start with ample rain, good leadership starts with being **effective and ethical**. Just as the value of good rain in a good year must be maximised, good leadership requires action to build upon being effective and ethical.

The action required involves being a leader of the head, a leader of the heart and a leader of the hands.

Leadership of the **head** requires the capacity to analyse, think, strategize, plan and implement plans with solid and professional management competencies. It is about thinking, understanding and calculating.

Leadership of the **heart** calls for emotional intelligence and empathy with people whether these people are part of the team, clients, shareholders, workers or neighbours. It requires inspirational communication and dedication and commitment to do unto others as one wants to be done unto you. It is just about understanding and applying the golden rule(s) to treat others well and to act ethically and morally. It is about having compassion for other people irrespective of their wealth, status or power.

Leadership of the **hands** require doing, and it must be done energetically, actively and passionately.

Leadership of the head, heart and the hand is leadership with purpose for a purpose. Purpose driven leadership is strong on vision and commitment and

weak on boundaries. It involves and inspires people into professional planning and impactful implementation in a continuous set of dedicated and disciplined actions striving for excellence. It requires inspiration and action toward a better destiny linked to meticulous attention to detail in a quest toward zero defect.

The most recent Harvard Business School research on the top leadership competencies grouped into five themes surveyed 195 global leaders. The research produced the following findings on the qualities of leaders which are most highly rated:

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- have high ethical and moral standards: 67%;
- provide goals and objectives and sensitively oversee the accomplishment of these: 59%;
- communicate expectations clearly: 56%
- are flexible and sensitive to change their opinions: 52%
- are committed to the ongoing development of people: 43%
- communicate often, openly and clearly: 42%;
- are open to new ideas and approaches: 39%;
- create a feeling of succeeding and failing together: 38%;
- assist in the growth of team members and other human beings to become leaders in the future in their own right: 38%;
- provide safety for trial and error: 37%

What is significant in this list is not only what is included, but also what is not. What is not included is that good leaders are strict, strong, disciplinarian, hard or harsh and unbendingly always right.

Good leaders are purposeful with passion and compassion. They lead with their heads, hearts and hands.

In conclusion, leadership under condition of complexity and challenge may require that leaders have the capacity to understand and the courage to admit that they do not always have all the answers.

And also that they do not need to have all the answers always.

Leadership in situations of complexity may require of the leaders to facilitate processes of innovative journeys of learning and discovery. This leadership approach requires of the leader to understand that there are no easy answers and to involve their people in a process of experimentation and learning to facilitate new approaches and build new competencies to deal with complex issues such as political instability, economic uncertainty, climate unpredictability and endemic uncertainty. This is where leadership with easy answers become leadership without easy answers, which calls for flexibility and innovation rather than for rigidity and strictness.

Is leadership an art, a profession, a science and/or a calling? It is all of the above and a privilege to be used for the benefit of all rather than to privilege the few. ■

