Leadership - The 5 Worst Traits of Poor Leaders

By Duncan Brodie

As a leader you are tasked with delivering results. The best leaders know that consistently delivering great results is not something that they can do in isolation. To get others to support them in consistently delivering results they need to avoid the 5 worst traits of poor leaders. In my experience these include:

Trait 1: Being arrogant

Without doubt you want a leader to be self assured and confident. At the same time you want them to be self-aware and understand the impact that they have on others. If you are someone who is arrogant you will do a great job at turning people off and disengaging him or her.

Trait 2: Unwilling to listen

You are the leader, you are in charge, you take the decisions and you make things happen. You don't need the views and opinions of others- right? Well yes if you want do completely de-motivate people and isolate them. On the other hand if you want to work with your people to deliver great service and performance, make the time to listen to them.

Trait 3: Bullying

No one likes or respects a bully. A bully is not only bad news for those that they lead but is costly too. An article in Personnel Today in December 2007 suggests that it hits the bottom line. At that time it was suggested that work place bullying was costing more than £2bn a year in sick pay, staff turnover and productivity.

In the long run, leaders who rely on bullying or heavy handed tactics will more than likely find themselves in the middle of an ocean in a sinking ship without a life jacket at some point. How appealing does that sound?

Trait 4: Favoritism

Tough as it may be, your job as a leader is to try and aim to treat everyone the same and avoid favoritism. It can be tempting to have favorites but can be extremely dangerous in the long run. The reason is that you will create divisions in teams that can lead to 'in fighting' instead of time and energies being focused on results.

Trait 5: Disorganized

If you have ever worked for someone who consistently turns up late for meetings, does not have all of their papers available and fails to keep on track, you will know just how troublesome this can be. With more and more demands on leaders' time, being organized is no longer an optional extra.

Bottom line- if you want to prosper as a leader you need to maximize good traits and minimize the bad traits. So what action do you need to take to achieve this?