The Leader: Achieving Effectiveness
by **Frederick E Roach**

Ultimately, leaders are high achievers! They are recognized for their effectiveness in the accomplishment of specific goals. Leaders learn how to maximize their effectiveness and gain the best results for their organization.

We recognize that people want to learn to be more effective. Stephen R. Covey has sold many millions of his book, "The 7 Habits Of Highly Effective People" because people have a basic desire to be personally effective. Not many people go to work and say, 'I'm going to try and be as ineffective as I can be today.'"

Understanding how to get a task done as effectively as possible, no matter how large the task, enhances our value as employees and leaders. "Understanding" is critical here, versus mere effort. In his book, Covey said: "Effectiveness, often even survival, does not depend solely on how much effort we expend, but on whether or not the effort we expend is in the right jungle."

To achieve the best results in our fast-changing world, we must first learn how to be more effective before we learn how to be more efficient. The first relates more to our leadership role and the second to our management role. Covey added that "most every industry and profession demands leadership first and management second."

While leaders drive for more effectiveness, there should be a corresponding push for efficiency. We pointed out before that these two ideas are not mutually exclusive! In Drucker Foundation's book, "The Leader Of The Future," there's an article by Ken Blanchard. He highlights the work of one of his colleagues, Dick Ruhe, who created a two-dimensional model of effectiveness and efficiency.

In Ruhe's model, we note that "only when your vision and implementation strategies are aligned can you get to be considered an 'ultimate' organization, in which people can be empowered." With "effectiveness all about vision and direction" and "efficiency talking about systems and procedures . . . the way things are done," we can see the importance of these attributes for our organization.

Characteristics Of Effective Leaders

1. **High On Ability**

   Success at times looks effortless. This might appear to be the case because of the basic innate ability of the leader. There's the willingness to expand their "ability quotient."

2. **Strategic Thinkers**

   One of the toughest tasks for effective leaders is that of sorting out the critical few priorities from the many important issues that have to be considered to reach the best result.

3. **Far-Sighted**

   Effective leaders know where they are going. They even know the direction, if not all the side streets they must pass through. They have the ability to remain single-minded as they move toward the goal.

4. **Ethical**

   To be effective over the long term, leaders establish ethical pathways to follow. This creates the knowledge that they are people who can be counted on.

5. **Overcomers**

   We can't over-estimate the need for a strong mental commitment if we're reaching for

effectiveness. Making the commitment mentally to a project creates momentum that propels us to achievement.

6. **Tenacious**

   There is strong, purposeful determination with effective leaders. There's an unwillingness to give in to roadblocks. The roadblocks merely become stepping-stones toward success.

7. **Emotionally Secure**

   To be emotional is natural . . . good. Effective leaders know how to control their emotions to make them a positive force in their lives. They recognize that uncontrolled anger, fear and worry can rob them of effectiveness.

8. **Team Builders**

   The most effective leaders recognize the value of working with others. They know what can be accomplished as a result of building a strong leadership team.

9. **Influencers**

   Inherent in the idea of leadership is the concept of being able to influence people. The most effective leaders love to share their rationale about a project and gain "buy-in" from their associates.

10. **Accountable**

    Effective leaders are willing to accept responsibility and attempt tough assignments. They recognize it's appropriate for leaders to be held accountable for creating positive results.