

The Leader: Learning From The Master Teacher

by **Frederick E Roach**

We can learn from those we deeply respect. Since learning is a lifelong experience, we can continue gaining insight and expertise from the people we observe, work with, and from the authors, leaders and others who strongly influence our lives.

It's been said you can tell a lot about a person by learning who their heroes are, or the people they hold in high esteem, or the authors who positively challenge them. A form of praise is emulating the spirit or actions of someone we admire.

From 40 years of business experience, I can immediately recall the people whose positive traits I've strived to imitate. Most of us also can remember those who demonstrated management and leadership styles so negative we've avoided them in building our own leadership styles.

In previous issues of Leadership Brief, we highlighted truths discovered from great leaders and teachers. We explored key leadership concepts within our own Baylor family, highlighting concepts of Boone Powell, Jr. and Joel Allison, and reflecting on the legacy of Boone Powell, Sr.

We've covered a broad cross section of influential teachers and authors. From a historical perspective, we've reviewed the critical leadership styles of two very different men: Abraham Lincoln and Sitting Bull. In the Bible, we've studied the life, teachings and contributions of Jesus, David and 10 other great biblical leaders.

We also tried sharing the best from modern business literature, including the philosophies of Stephen R. Covey, Peter M. Senge and Bill Bennett. Dealing with issues such as the acceleration of change, we looked at what men including Michael Hammer and Dr. Leland Kaiser have to share. We also reviewed the life of Mahatma Gandhi.

During the past month, a small group I recently joined has studied the book, "The Management Methods of Jesus,:" by Bob Briner.

The book highlights 50 attributes making Jesus such an effective leader. Here is a summary:

Critical Management Issues

1. Key In On Relationships

Work to build your relationships. Be real yourself and expect your associates to be real. Be sensitive and responsive to people's needs. Deal with issues as quickly as possible. Jesus "never put anyone on hold," Briner said.

2. Practice Humility

Here, Briner says: "Don't fall into the trap of arrogance. Not only is it unseemly, it is bad business." Don't get overly excited about your role or title. Work to help strengthen others.

3. Plan For Success



"A plan puts you in charge of your energies and activities. Inadequate preparation produces inadequate results," Briner said. Our corporate plan ought to generate passion and commitment.

4. **Communicate Aggressively**

Communication is the heart of leadership. It involves communicating the plan, the goals; it encompasses the need for private sessions, going one on one. Briner adds: "Too many executives fail to use their platforms to inspire and to inform."

5. **Demonstrate Gratefulness**

"Praise those who work for you," Briner said. "Do it publicly!" He adds: "It is impossible to say thanks too many times."

6. **Be Results-Oriented**

Ultimately, leaders must generate results. To do this, they must be sensitive as to when to use participatory leadership styles and when to use their authority. There are absolutes on which good leaders must insist.

7. **Demonstrate Integrity**

Briner writes: "When there is clear, irrefutable evidence of corruption within the corporation, move immediately to handle it." Briner said, "Never, never try to cover it up."

8. **Build A Strong Support System**

Here, Briner emphasizes recruiting the right people, then giving them the right tools for success. Jesus filled a top spot in Christian leadership by recruiting Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus.

9. **Remember Your Purpose**

Know your purpose! Establish the appropriate timing! The "timing of Jesus was always perfect," Briner said. Seize the moment! Set a high standard for employees and expect them to perform.

10. **Take Time For Relaxation**

We've all heard of the need to "sharpen the saw." This process is different for each of us, but critically important for all. We can then come back to our work "refreshed and energized."