



This is the first in a seven-part series dedicated to effective leadership behaviors. This series offers their insight into how to develop these behaviors.

Leadership Behaviors: An Introduction

By Aubrey Daniels, Ph.D. and James Daniels, Ph.D.

Not everyone wants to be a leader. Many people look at the effort involved in leadership and judge the payoff to be too meager. Yet almost everyone wants to have their ideas considered and implemented. Those who don't take a leadership stance can only watch as their ideas and wishes dissipate, as daydreams usually do. For those with no ambition for something more, this will probably only cause a short pang of regret. But for someone who is genuinely concerned about the future, either that of their own or of

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, then you are a leader.”

— John Quincy Adams

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their group, leadership becomes important. This doesn't mean that you have to be a boss to be a leader, because leadership is not necessarily position-based. There are opportunities almost daily for an individual to be a leader, no matter their job title.

We believe it can be assumed that, if you are reading this, you have some interest in becoming a more effective leader. If so you should know that leadership can be practiced. While there might be *natural* leaders, they are rare, and you would be ill-advised to believe that you are one of *the blessed*. So just what skills should you practice? The following is a proposed short list of behaviors which will enhance your ability to lead others and which, when deliberately practiced, can enhance your leadership impact:

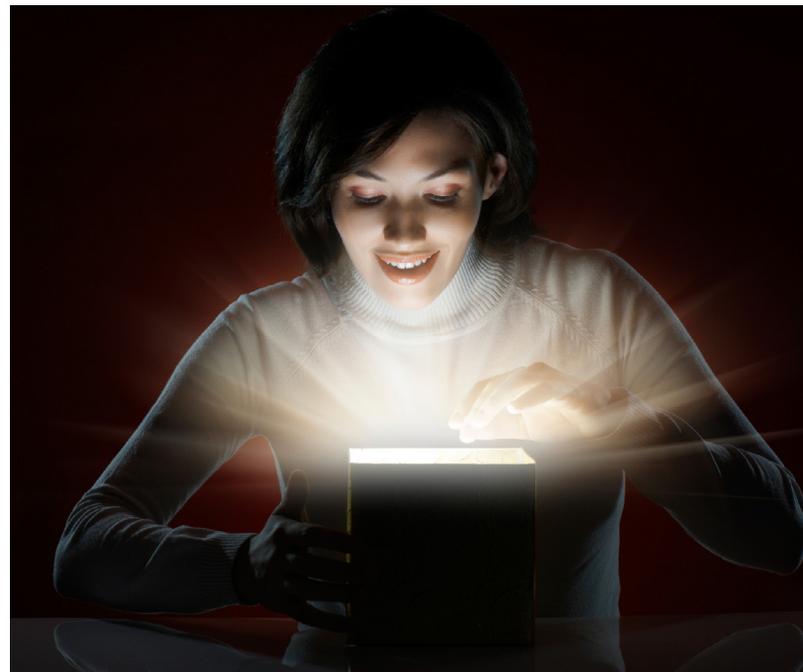
1. Focused listening
2. Work sampling of subordinate behaviors
3. Demonstrating interest in, and concern for, subordinates
4. Aligning subordinate behavior with the mission
5. Reinforcing ethical behavior
6. Conserving resources (money, time, and follower effort)
7. Increasing innovative idea implementations

We do not think this is a complete list. When turned into behaviors, this will be more like a

“starter kit,” essential tools that can be added to over time. In future posts we will offer you specific ideas and directions on how to practice these skills and explain how you can tell if they fit into your leadership tool box. After all, we're sure you've seen lots of bosses (some of whom were also leaders) who did not use even one of these skills. Finding your own style is important and we believe that it is most quickly found and developed when you consciously practice the skills that will set you apart.

Before we begin pinpointing these behaviors, it will be important for you to do some soul searching. What kind of leader do you envision becoming? How do you intend to use the power that comes from leadership? Are you willing to put the necessary effort into leadership over time? Do you see your leadership as limited in its scope (to a project for example) or do you see it being harnessed to a cause, and if so, what is that cause?

Do you want to be a leader so you can rule over people—be the authority figure so you can control what they do and what happens?



You'd better be a high-energy person with strong will-power if this is your idea, but we do not recommend this choice, as its effectiveness is short-lived and often leads to ethical dilemmas as the person strives to maintain control. In addition, the greater your need for control, the higher the cost to you personally. Are you prepared to pay that price?

Do you believe in finding the right people and then getting out of their way? This is a *dreamer* style, where you put out your energy up-front and hope for the best. You have to be an optimist to adopt this style, believing that the right people will do the right things. Good people without good leadership will produce a frustrated work force with all of

the difficulties that involves. The cost of this style will be found in both conflict and wasted resources.

Our hope is that you will choose to be more of a first among equals; one who shapes the behaviors and attitudes of those you lead into a winning team. Leaders such as these don't depend on position for their authority. Done well, authority comes from the good will of the followers. The cost of this style of leadership is the effort spent in self-management and self-control. Some might consider this an investment.

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Our basic premise is that, for leaders, your followers define you and your style. Put another way, the behavior of those led speaks volumes about their leader. Behavior which is coerced is recognizably different from behavior that comes from being inspired. While even the most benevolent leader will sometimes use his/her authority to force compliance, authoritarian leaders rarely attempt to inspire performance except with threats, money, or position.

The list of behaviors above will form the basis for developing followers who work to make their leader successful.

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[About the Authors]



AUBREY DANIELS, PH.D.

Aubrey is a thought leader and expert on management, leadership, safety and workplace issues. For the past 40 years, he has been dedicated to helping people and organizations apply the laws of human behavior to optimize performance.

JAMES DANIELS, PH.D.

Jamie Daniels is a former leader and longtime associate of Aubrey Daniels International, having developed productivity and quality improvement systems for corporations in the United States, Canada, South America, Australia and Europe. Jamie is coauthor of Performance Management: Changing Behavior that Drives Organizational Effectiveness (fourth edition) and Measure of a Leader.

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