

CHAPTER 31

THE LITTLE THINGS TO LEADERSHIP

What is leadership? Leadership isn't easy. It requires time, energy, and both physical and fiscal investments. Much is known about leadership, but there is no one definition for leadership. Author Joe Roest found 221 different definitions of leadership while writing his book *Leadership in the 21st Century*.

Forbes Magazine reported that over \$15 billion is spent annually in the United States teaching executives about leadership. That's over 14.5 tons in twenty-dollar bills spent every year just to train the hierarchy of organizations. That doesn't cover students, employees, and supervisors.

Leadership is important. I believe *leadership* is the ability to inspire, motivate, or encourage an individual or group to accomplish a dream. We all want to be successful leaders, and we want to work with successful leaders. The dilemma with leadership is that we focus so much on the goal or outcome that we forget about the little things.

“Enjoy the little things in life for one day you’ll look back and realize they were the big things.”

– Kurt Vonnegut

Luck is when preparation meets opportunity. Being a successful leader requires luck. The ultimate lucky number is *seven*. Here are *Seven Little Things* that you can do to become a highly effective leader.

1. Show Genuine Interest.

Study the people you lead. Know their strengths and their opportunities for growth; know their likes and dislikes, know their motivations. Don't treat the people you lead like a number. Know each of them as an individual.

2. Be Visible.

Be a role model. Set the example. Show up for the activities you ask others to attend. Let people see you working. Actively display the behaviors you want people to exhibit.

3. Be a Teacher.

Provide people with a vision and teach people how to make that vision come true. Invest the time and resources to train people thoroughly and constantly. Develop a training program that helps people grow.

4. Delegate.

You can't do everything yourself. Discover the talents of the people you lead. Use their talents to accomplish the goal or vision. Put people in positions to excel and grow.

5. Do the S-ugar H-oney I-ce T-ea Jobs!

Don't delegate only dirty jobs. Show everyone that you are willing to get dirty, too. When people see you doing the tough jobs, you will earn their respect.

6. Be Honest.

Truthfully explain why decisions are made. A lack of integrity and communication can lead to rumors, uncertainty, and distrust. Be fair and keep things professional versus personal.

7. Reward People.

All feedback must be given at the proper time. This is especially true for positive feedback or rewards. Some people require a simple *thank you*. Other people require more. Find ways to celebrate every accomplishment or visual display of growth. If you truly know (rule one) the people you lead, finding unique ways to reward them won't be a problem.