

## Become a true leader

Every business or organisation, big or small, needs a leader. They have committees, chains of command divisions, but the overall company and each division must have strong leadership if it's to be successful.

You can't "raise" morale in an organisation, yes you can improve how motivated and positive people feel about their work and the business. But it doesn't rise from the bottom, it comes from the top. The attitudes of the staff in any organisation always reflect the attitude of the leader. Ultimately that leader is just one person: a Richard Branson or a Rosalind Brewer.

When they aren't doing as well as they should, even the largest and oldest companies with thousands and thousands of employees and hundreds of senior managers will find one person and appoint him or her into a position of ultimate authority. The whole company, the board of directors, shareholders will look to this one person to lead the company to success.

Wherever you find a successful going concern, whether it's an online business or a chain of supermarkets, or a one-off shop or small business or even a well-organised home, you'll find an outstanding leader behind its success. They are the most valuable person in their organisation and society. In industry, these leaders make the wheels turn and the whole economy work. Together these leaders are responsible for the wealth of nations. They employ millions of people. These leaders are the world's dreamers and planners. The clock is something that other people watch.

These people work early and late. Even when they're not working, they're thinking and planning.

In the US during the Great Depression in the 1930s, millions of people were unemployed. We've experienced global recessions in the 1970s, 80s, 90s and most recently in 2009, thankfully not on the same scale but the example of the Great Depression is still useful. Employers often heard: "I'll do anything; just give me a job." Millions were unemployed. Thousands of businesses went bust and long queues of people stood outside employment offices waiting for any kind of work. Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath* tells the story of that time, and the thousands of people who migrated to California looking for work. Nightingale shares a story about a man in Long Beach, California, who found work where it seemed there was none.

"This man realised that the businesses were just as anxious to succeed as the people looking for work were. The owners and managers of these businesses were worried about the economic downturn and were looking for someone to come to their rescue, the person who would somehow show up and solve their business problems. But all they heard were people asking for work saying: "I'll do anything." These people were asking for a place in a company that was very likely teetering on the brink of financial ruin itself. Employers started putting up signs saying: "No help wanted". This kept the hordes of desperate unemployed away, but it also hurt business.

"Well this person decided to become a part of the solution instead of part of the problem, and his method was simple. He chose the kind of business he would like to work in and where he could build a career. He then found out all he could about that particular business. He talked to other people in the same line of work. He listened to their problems and what they felt was challenging in their industry. He talked for hours, asking questions about what they thought would improve things and so on. He went to the library and read everything he could find on that industry and then he began to think of ways to improve this business.

"When he was ready and finally went in to the company he wanted to work for, instead of asking for a job he said something like this: "I believe

I know several ways in which your business can be greatly increased, and I'd like to talk to you about them." There he was, selling the one thing on Earth that his prospect was most interested in. Because he had learned a good deal about the business he could talk about it intelligently. He took a positive attitude, expressed a willingness to pitch in and help put the business on a sound footing. He got the job.

"Millions of people out of work and asking for jobs but one man who found a way to be of help. What had he done? Well, first he specialised. He chose one line of work and decided that was where his future was going to be. Now he had to prove himself, and he did.

"The jack-of-all-trades and master of none suffered during the Depression. People who know what they were doing and where they were going sailed through those Depression years just like a large ship sails through a storm. Thousands of businesses actually grew larger and prospered during the Depression." Walt Disney, Hewlett Packard, Revlon and United Airlines were all established in the US during the Great Depression.

So how to apply this anecdote to you and your goals? The best way to develop job security is to specialise, to become outstanding at your line of work. Look at it this way: regardless of economic ups and downs, the industry which you work in will continue to operate; it won't shut down completely. Even in this age of accelerating change, even with unimagined crises like Covid-19, most industries persist. How they trade may change – the department stores that now only sell online for example. This is why I encouraged you to think about how your job would be done in the future in *lesson 2*. As long as you're in the top 5% of people in your industry, you'll always be in demand, you'll be wanted and needed.

The man or woman who becomes truly outstanding at what he or she does has the world at their feet. He or she has confidence and peace of mind, is quietly aware of his or her ability and knowledge. He or she is at the top.

Ask yourself whether you are such a person right now. Deep down inside, you know the answer. If you said yes, then you're a member of one of the smallest and most elite groups on Earth. But if you answered no, you can

turn it into a yes in a surprisingly short time. The first step is to make one very big and important decision. Most people never make this decision and it holds them back from ever really getting on course or clarifying his or her goals. If you make the decision I'm now going to recommend, you can take a deep breath, focus firmly on your target and go to work relaxed, safe in the knowledge that the success you want will surely be yours. The decision is simple: decide to be vital to the success of your business or industry.

The great steel magnate Andrew Carnegie said the formula for success was to put all your eggs in one basket, and then watch that basket. Think about who gets made redundant during an economic slump. It's the same idea behind what gets thrown overboard when a ship is in danger of sinking; anything that isn't absolutely essential to the operation of the ship and the safety of its passengers is jettisoned. The same principle applies to a business or any other organisation. A corporation's aim is to stay in business forever. As long as it's in business it can deliver the product or service, protect the investment of its investors and provide jobs for staff who are essential to its operation.

Management must protect the firm and the people who depend upon it, in the same way as a captain must do everything in his power to keep the ship afloat. To make sure that you won't be jettisoned in a recession, make sure that you are a vital part of the business or organisation you work in. People who do the minimum, who say they won't do any more than they're paid to do, the quiet quitters we've heard about, must expect to be let go when times get tough. Gallup data suggests that a majority of workers are still quiet quitting. According to the State of the Global Workplace 2023 Report, nearly six in 10 global employees are psychologically disengaged from their organisation, even if they're putting in their contracted hours. In that context, making yourself indispensable to your organisation isn't as difficult as it once was.

In a downturn staff are laid off to preserve the company in the long term. To go back to the ship analogy, you have to decide whether you want to be cargo that can be thrown overboard when the ship is in trouble or an essential member of the crew.

Nightingale claimed that millions of people suffer from a condition called panophobia, literally fear of everything. He explained:

“It’s an uneasy feeling; a feeling of insecurity that generally manifests itself as sort of a lump of fear that settles right behind the belt buckle, especially on Sunday evenings and on Monday mornings. There’s nothing you can put your finger on, it’s just an apprehension, a foreboding. And this extremely unpleasant feeling tends to result from the unspoken but realised fact that we’re getting credit for more than we’re actually doing, that we’re doing less than we could be doing. It’s the perfectly natural and normal understanding deep within each of us, that there’s something basically wrong about getting praise that’s not earned; or if you’re an employee, being paid for something you’re not doing as well as you possibly can.

“If we have panophobia, running doesn’t do any good. It follows us on holiday and around the house and at the weekends. It’s inside us, and no matter how fast the plane we board is or how exciting the television program we’re watching is, soon we’re aware of it again. The cure for this feeling is to throw ourselves into our work. Decide to be worth more than you’re being paid. This is the only way we can grow. It’s overbalancing the scales of the service we give, knowing that our reward must follow as a natural result. Most of us are happiest and most satisfied when we’ve completed a difficult job successfully.”

Earlier I spoke about the importance of leaders. Don’t be put off by the word. A leader isn’t just the president of a country or the CEO of a huge corporation. A leader is anyone who can help and lead others. It’s the parent who guides their children conscientiously, the student who studies to learn, not just to get the grade. It’s the man or woman whose small business continues to grow. It’s the employee who knows that you get most out of a job by giving effort and dedication to the firm that pays your wages.

Anyone who realises the importance of becoming a bigger and better person with the passing of every day is a leader. A leader takes responsibility. They are a planner, a thinker, a doer. We can all become leaders in our own areas of work. It’s not difficult. Focus on your goal, visualise it fully, enjoy the idea of achieving it and set out towards it with determination.

I'm the leader of Regent Group with my wife Tharshiny. I started as a chartered accountant and Tharshiny as a graduate in Computer Sciences. We weren't experts in education yet we now manage a global organisation offering education from kindergarten to sixth form, higher education and beyond, as well as courses, online micro-credentials and transformational programmes in the UK and overseas. We're now working towards launching a new UK university Regent Hill with degree-awarding powers. At each step we've needed vision, we've needed to learn, to become expert in new areas. It is possible.

Remember we spoke about attitude in *lesson 1*. Have a cheerful, helpful attitude towards everyone. You know you'll achieve everything you've set your heart upon so of course you're cheerful. Soak up knowledge that will help you on your way. You'll achieve your goal sooner than you think, but don't be impatient; what you've earned will come to you in time.

Nightingale says:

"Everything in the world works on the side of the person who works with nature's laws. Above all, if you forget everything else, remember that everything about you, everything you will ever have, know, or experience in any way, operates as a result of a law, a law that is true and unchanging, the law of the stars and of the balance of the world. As Emerson wrote: "Let him learn the prudence of a higher strain; let him learn that everything in nature, even dust and feathers, go by law and not by luck, and that what he sows he reaps."

Where you are right now is a result of what you've done up to now – what you've sown. Are you happy with what you have? Are you satisfied with where you are? If you aren't then you know what you must sow today and tomorrow and the next day. We reap what we sow, cause and effect, action and reaction. Then, having sown, rest in cheerful certainty that you reap the rich rewards that you deserve.

Now this is Selva Pankaj reminding you that success as a human being in modern society does not come automatically. You need to offer service to others. We have our minds, our potential, time and our free will. We

live in a free society and can become whatever we make up our minds to become. That's possible because whatever we seriously decide to do is unique to our individual potential. A person with little or no aptitude for science won't choose to become a scientist; an introvert won't apply for a job in sales or at least won't persist in it for long.

The Mindset program you've heard on TIC VLE contains the best, basic information and the great ideas we need to reach our goals whatever they are. Listen to what these lessons offer: you'll be surprised at what you missed the first or second time you listened. This happens because when we first listen, an idea will catch our interest and we concentrate on it for a few seconds. While we're thinking about that idea, we miss what's being said next. The second time we listen, that first idea doesn't catch our attention in the same way because we're familiar with it. We can now consciously hear what immediately follows for the first time.

Think of this program and the other programs you complete in the future, as your partners in success. Refer back to them.

*Your life is about to change.*

*Strange and marvellous things shall start to happen in your life.*

*Thank You*

*Think of a leader you admire. It can be someone you have worked with or someone you are aware of. What qualities made them a good leader?*

*How can you cultivate some of the habits and behaviours that made them a good leader? Are there any barriers or difficulties to you emulating them?*

*What are you doing to make yourself expert in your line of work?  
What more can you do?*

*The Mindset is based on Lead the Field by Earl Nightingale.*