

# Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

## LESSON TEN



### THE MOST VALUABLE PERSON

The Leader is the Most  
Valuable Person

**“The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. The greatest leader is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things.”**

**Ronald Reagan**

A part of



## 1. OVERVIEW

## NOTES

In this lesson we learn that you need to be an intelligent follower if you wish to be a good leader. A good leader brings out the very best in people and gets them to feel good about themselves. A good leader finds that people follow them, not because they have to, but because they want to.

We also learn that there are no barriers to leadership opportunities, including age, except the limits we impose on ourselves. In this digital economy, organisations are finally recognising that the positive impact young people bring is what is driving innovation forward.



We also learn that you can apply these leadership principles into everything that you do: from your studies and education to your performance on your sports team; to making your voice heard at local and national government level; to your career; an apprenticeship; volunteering in your local community, even to your own start-up business. There are absolutely no limits.

If there is one secret to leading others, it is to generate an atmosphere in which they feel at ease and appreciated.

As the late Reagan quoted, "The greatest leader.... is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things." Teamwork is essential. Relationships are likely to be strained when people are asked to do things which they were not involved with at the planning stage or to undertake work for which they will receive no recognition.

**"Employ your time in improving yourself by other people's writings, so you shall come easily by what others have laboured hard for."**

**Socrates**

## NOTES

The effective leader must be a strong innovator. Such a leader must be able to originate an innovative idea. To focus only on that idea and reject any other idea that is presented which would not support the materialisation of the original idea.

To be a strong innovator alone does not make a person an effective leader; you must be capable of becoming subjective to another person's idea within the confines of that idea and carry it through to completion.

**The effective leader does not have an ego issue. They do not compete, they create. And although at times they appear to operate with a closed mind and total stubbornness, that is definitely not the case.**

The effective leader is frequently working with a creative idea which leads in a new direction. It is not uncommon for the leader to experience great resistance even from their most loyal followers. This is frequently because there may not be any evidence to the followers indicating that the leader is going in the right direction. The true leader is being led from within.

They have an understanding of the unseen aspect of the vision. Because of the continuing lack of evidence that they are being properly led, the resistance frequently grows. However, the effective leader is calm and will not waiver. They remain focused, totally confident and know they are moving and leading in the right direction. Eventually, evidence does appear to the outside world, and the vision the leader has held materialises for all the world to see and enjoy.



The effective leader does not have an ego issue. They do not compete, they create. And although at times they appear to operate with a closed mind and total stubbornness, that is definitely not the case. The truth is rarely in the appearance of things. The effective leader is truly a creative visionary. They quietly and calmly follow the little voice within that tells them the way to go. Although it may not be obvious, they are extremely observant. They miss little, if anything, of what is going on in their world.



They are active listeners. When they receive a suggestion from a follower that has value, they quickly investigate the idea and if they determine the other person's idea is superior to their own, they reject their own idea. They accept the other person's idea and work with it as if it were their own, always publicly giving the other person who originated the idea full credit.

This does not, however, mean that every idea that comes their way is accepted. In fact, few are — only those ideas that move everyone closer to the manifestation of the leader's vision.

Young leadership has its own set of challenges. Quite often, the young leader or entrepreneur is not taken seriously. Josh Valman, Founder of RPD International and one of the top young entrepreneurs of the year in 2018 is a good example of this.

**You do not need a title to be a leader.  
You can already make a difference.**

After expressing an interest in design at the age of 13, Valman would often send his designs to factories across the UK, only to be receive sarcastic replies about his age.

Undeterred, Valman rounded up his life savings at the time (a mere £500) and sent his blueprints to China. Unlike the UK, manufacturers in the Far East were keen to work with him.

Two years later, aged 15, Valman expanded his business, practising as a freelance engineer and consulting a business on its \$20m supply chain via Skype in between finishing school and starting his homework!

In 2013, aged 18, Valman founded RPD International, a design and manufacturing firm, which boasted phenomenal growth from take-off. The company was valued at £1million within its first six months of trading.



## NOTES

Today, RPD is worth £5m and boasts a current growth rate of 450% year-on-year. It supports over 100 research and development departments across Europe and Asia. Valman operates RPD across two offices in the UK and China, with manufacturing facilities across 40 countries.

Valman struck back at those who thought he was too young to be running such a successful business: "My last few years have been about proving it does work and now we have that credibility, age is irrelevant. The business is run by a team, it's not just me. Look at our clients, 96 blue chip clients – it tells you something."

Another UK Young Entrepreneur of the Year finalist, Makaela Richardson started her first year at university and saw a business opportunity for students to obtain their essentials at a reasonable price. The enterprising student launched 'Free the Fresher', a subscription service delivering university necessities such as stationery, kitchenware, bedding, and even hangover kits, directly to students' doors. Depending on the package, each member paid a one-time fee of between £50 to £75 to receive three boxes throughout the year along with exclusive discounts from brands such as Nandos, Amazon, Co-op and ASOS.



Within just two months of launch, over 3,000 students signed up to the service and by the end of its first year of trading, 'Free the Fresher' boasted over 10,600 members. Richardson now employs five staff and her company is already profitable. With £2.5m turnover it looks to be an exciting year for this self-made entrepreneur.

**Think about what can you do in your future career to hit that top 5% of workforce in your area of expertise**

Proof, if any was needed, that you can start a successful business even while studying!

Think about what you can do in your future career to hit that top 5% of the workforce in your area of expertise, so that you are seen as a leader in that field. Or think what can you do in your spare time to set up your own entrepreneurial business?

You do not need a title to be a leader. 'If only I was a Manager or a CEO, then I could really make a difference.' This simply is not true. You can already make a difference.



## 2. KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The effective leader has a vision of where they are going and knows how they will get people to buy into that vision.

- Become an intelligent follower. Become the best follower that you are capable of becoming. The person who is not a good follower is never going to be an effective leader.
- Within your career, develop in your own mind a belief and deep respect for your leader. This will help you develop the awareness of the importance of earning that respect from your followers when you become a leader.
- Organisations are always looking for great leadership; for individuals who see themselves as a strong leader.
- Leaders create an environment that brings out the best in others which is why the leader is the person others want to follow.
- An effective leader understands who they are, takes control of their own life and leads themselves in the direction they want to go. The effective leader knows how to give themselves a command and follow it. Effective leaders understand their creative abilities; they know they have the capacity to create anything they want in their world – whether it is on an individual basis or as the leader of a team or organisation.

**A leader has a great attitude. A leader will automatically look for and find the good in others.**

- A leader has a great attitude. A leader will automatically look for and find the good in others.
- The effective leader maintains a good attitude regardless of what is going on outside.
- Leaders know where they are going and although they have plans, they do not know how they are going to get there. They only know they are going to get there. They will change their plan but never the goal.
- Leaders understand that if a person is not prepared to do more than they are being paid for, they will never be paid for more than what they are doing.





### 3. WORKSHEETS

1. How would you describe yourself, as a leader or a follower?
  - i. Who are you following?
  - ii. What are the qualities or characteristics of this leader that you wish to emulate?
  
2. If you consider yourself at this time as a follower, know that being a follower is not bad or wrong. Being an effective follower will prepare you for leadership.
  - i. Who are you following?
  - ii. What are the qualities or characteristics of this leader that you wish to emulate?
  - iii. What action steps can you take this week to embrace these characteristics?
  - iv. How can you be a better follower?





v. What action steps can you take to prepare yourself to be a leader?

3. If you consider yourself as a leader...

i. How would you describe yourself as a leader?

ii. How would you describe your attitude? Is this your attitude regardless of what is going on outside?

iii. What are you creating as a leader? What is the vision you have for your life?

iv. What is your plan to help move towards this vision?



v. How are you developing the people around you?

vi. What action steps can you take to be an even more effective leader?

4. How can you do more than what you are paid for? What would that look like?





## 4. READING ARTICLE

### The Person On The White Horse - Adapted from Earl Nightingale

The outstanding leader in any field is the most valued person in society. Every organisation needs leadership. You do not raise morale, it filters down from the top. People will always reflect the attitude of the leader. Behind every outstanding success is an outstanding leader. This leader starts early and stays late and when not working is thinking and planning.

This leader can go to work almost anywhere he or she chooses. He does not ask for work but shows up and leads the way. He is a specialist and not a jack of all trades. The best way to develop security that lasts a lifetime is to become outstanding at one particular line of work. As long as you are in the top 5% of that industry you'll always be in demand. You have the world on a string. You are confident and quietly aware of your ability and intimate knowledge of your particular work. They have it made and they and everybody else knows it. Am I now such a person?

**The best way for you to develop the security that lasts a lifetime is to become outstanding at one particular line of work.**

The first step is to make one big and important decision. Andrew Carnegie said, "Put all your eggs in one basket and then watch that basket." When you begin working make sure that you are a vital part of your company. Do more than you are paid to do. Are you a part of the cargo or a part of the crew? Are you getting credit for more than you are actually doing? Are you doing less than you could be doing? Any job that is worth doing is worth doing well.

A leader is any person who realises the importance of becoming a bigger and better person with the passing of every day, week and month. A leader

takes responsibility for his own growth. Maintain a cheerful helpful attitude towards everyone. Why shouldn't you be cheerful since you know you will achieve everything you've set your heart on?

**When you begin working make sure that you are a vital part of your company. Do more than you are paid to do.**

Be a sponge for information that will help you on your way. You will be surprised at how quickly you will reach your goal, but do not be impatient. Know and have faith that what will come to you will come to you at the right time. Everything operates as a result of law that is true and unchanging. Having sown, you will automatically reap the rich results.

The best way for you to develop the security that lasts a lifetime is to become outstanding at one particular line of work. Look at it this way; regardless of economic ups and downs, the industry of which that line of work is a part, will continue to operate. It won't shut down completely. As long as you're in the top 5% of the people in that industry, you know you'll always be in demand – you'll be wanted and needed in that industry.

The man or woman who becomes truly outstanding at what he or she does has the world on a string. Here is a person with confidence and peace of mind. Here is a person who is quietly aware of his or her ability and has an intimate knowledge of his or her job and industry.

Success does not come naturally. It requires the conscious utilisation of ourselves in the service of others. We can become whatever we seriously make up our minds to become. Whatever we seriously decide to do is naturally linked to our genetic possibilities. Just pursue your natural aptitude.



## 5. ASSIGNMENT

Write your answers in the space provided below.

1. Evaluate your leadership skills and list any ideas for improvement below:

2. How can you develop what Earl Nightingale calls 'the security that lasts a lifetime'?

3. Resolve to, eachday, do more than you are paid or asked to do. If you are not working yet, then apply this to your studies. Do more than is asked of you by your teachers and tutors.



# NOTES