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Follow the leader

November 2010

Last month the Welsh Assembly Government, with the help of the European Social Fund and private sector funding, contributed £28m towards their Enhancing Leadership and Management Skills (ELMS) programme.

This second round of funding for the programme recognised the increasing need for leadership training in the workplace for small to medium sized businesses to compete within the global marketplace, something the Welsh government is pushing very hard for.

Over 23,000 people from 7,700 firms are set to benefit from the training. Lesley Griffiths, Deputy Minister for Science Innovation and Skills, said "Leadership and management skills are a key component of business success and if we fail to improve workforce, leadership and management skills and to apply those skills in the workplace then Welsh businesses will find it increasingly harder to compete."

We couldn't agree more. For a business to compete in today's difficult economy the latent skills hidden within their workforce will need to be uncovered, and their natural leaders moulded and encouraged.



Can anyone be trained to be a good leader?

There is a story told of an individual whose every decision turns to gold, every direction is followed, and every target achieved.

For them leadership comes as naturally as breathing and those they lead gain satisfaction from simply basking in the inspirational light of their management skills.

Of course this person does not exist, although some charismatic individuals do come close; the description is an unattainable myth that employees are told to

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encourage them to try harder.

But leadership qualities can be drawn out in most people and the skills required to inspire others and lead them to attaining their targets can be taught, so anyone can become a good leader with the right guidance.

To find out more about this read our latest article titled "[The X Factor of Leadership](#)".



What's the most important quality of leadership?

Read our review of the top five qualities your management team should possess in our article "[The Characteristics of a Good Leader](#)".

Is passion the most important quality in a leader, or is it the vision to lead their team towards a goal with the focused precision of a marksman's bullet?

The debate has raged for a very long time about what qualities an individual should possess to truly be an inspirational leader. This article aims to give a rounded review of each of these qualities so you can spot the potential in your workforce.



Tip of the Month

Leadership does not come from an excellent academic record or from a polished resume.

A good leader may have dropped out of school and anyone can create an impressive looking CV.

It's what motivates them to strive towards their goals and how they communicate this to others that show you who has leadership potential.

Joke of the Month

A man walks into a pet store looking to buy a monkey.



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Behind the counter is a jolly looking storekeeper, eager to help where he can.

He points the man towards three identical looking monkeys in politically correct, animal-friendly, natural mini-habitats (it was rather a large pet store).

"How much are they?" asks the man. "The one on the left will set you back £300" says the storekeeper.

"Wow, that's rather a lot, why so much?" asks the customer.

"Because it can sing and has a wonderful baritone voice," answers the storekeeper.

The stunned customer asks about the next monkey and is told, "That one will cost you £1,200 because it can talk and translate 20 languages."

The man can't believe his ears. "And that one?" he asks pointing at the third monkey who was sitting there with a bored look on its face.

"Oh, that one will cost you £5,000," continues the storekeeper.

"£5,000!!" exclaims the man. "What can that one do that could possibly afford it that value?"

To which the owner replies, "To be honest, I've never seen it do a single thing, but it calls itself a consultant."

- The Incisive Edge team



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