

Keys To Natural Leadership

Leadership exists on a continuum from managing self to managing others to managing the organization.

Natural leadership does not mean that you either have it or you don't. It does mean that you are willing to assess your style and behavior, and that you are willing to learn and grow.

The only person you can change is yourself.

Self-management comes before managing others or managing an organization. Understanding the impact of your behavior is crucial to leadership.

You must feel comfortable being in a leadership role.

Leadership calls for authenticity. If you are not comfortable with the role, others will sense it and withhold the full measure of whatever it is they have to contribute.

Natural leaders develop other leaders

Leaders of today must share skills, insight and power to bring along others who have the potential to lead. This includes giving others the opportunity to lead. Someone once said that leadership is like manure. Left in a pile it starts to smell really bad and does no good. Spread around evenly it promotes growth and doesn't smell bad at all.

As a leader, you must make sure information flows freely in all directions.

The culture must be such that withholding information to strengthen one's own power or for any reason is absolutely not tolerated.

Leadership in means sometimes fading into the background . . . when it is natural to do so.

You do not have to plan every tactic or lead every charge. Hire good people who can articulate your vision as well as you can (maybe even better) and then let them do it.

Leaders need to provide support.

Become a sponsor for someone else's idea or project. Make sure you provide the resources and structure others need to succeed.

Leaders must create a culture that encourages risk and tolerates mistakes.

In these times, playing it safe in business is the riskiest strategy.

Leadership skills can be developed.

Natural does not mean born with. Leadership skills can be learned and this learning circles back to self-management.