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Niccolo
Machiavelli

Lao-tse

St. Paul

George S.
Patton

THE
1000
GREATEST
LEADERSHIP
PRINCIPLES
OF ALL TIME

Edited by
Leslie Pockell
with
Adrienne Avila

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a matter of intelligence, trustworthiness, humaneness, courage, and discipline. . . . Reliance on intelligence alone results in rebelliousness. Exercise of humaneness alone results in weakness. Fixation on trust results in folly. Dependence on the strength of courage results in violence. Excessive discipline and sternness in command result in cruelty. When one has all five virtues together, each appropriate to its function, then one can be a leader.

— Sun Tzu

Sun Tzu's *Art of War* originally was intended to be read as a work of military strategy and philosophy. Yet even today, more than 2,000 years later, Sun Tzu's description of the traits that characterize a successful leader is valid in any arena—war, politics, business, and any endeavor that requires the ability to inspire and mobilize the efforts of a group in the service of a common goal.

Taking Sun Tzu's categories as a point of departure, this book is divided into five sections, each one containing twenty quotations that offer different perspectives on the requirements of leadership. The attentive reader will note that some of the principles seem to comment on others in different sections; for example, in the section on Trustworthiness, Douglas McArthur is quoted as saying "Never give an order that can't be obeyed"; while in the section on Discipline, these words of Sophocles appear: "What you cannot enforce, do not command." Almost the same sentiment, but not quite—Sophocles focuses on the leader, and McArthur on the led. It's in the conjunction of similar and even sometimes apparently conflicting principles that a three-dimensional image of the leader is intended to emerge.

What kind of person is the theoretical ideal leader? The ideal leader has the intelligence to understand the subtleties and complexity of the leadership role: It is not sufficient to bear the title and hold the authority of a leader to function as one. The very concept of leadership is subjective, which is why so many different varieties and degrees of leadership are evident in society and in business. The perfect leader understands what it means to lead, and to be led.

The ideal leader is aware of the mutual responsibility of the leader and the led: Each relies on and supports the other. A leader without a sense of humanity is only a leader by virtue of superior power, while a great leader inspires more by force of character and principle than by fear and intimidation.

The ideal leader is also someone who can be trusted. England's King Charles II was notoriously described as one "whose word no man relies on." For all his cleverness, he did not go down in history as a great leader; he never trusted anyone, and no one trusted him. The essence of trust and trustworthiness is the necessity of interdependence. If a leader loses the confidence of those who

follow, they will cease to follow; if a leader fails to trust the skills of those who follow, the result will be disaster. No one can lead alone; the concept is absurd.

A successful leader is courageous, and not simply in the physical sense. Many decisions must be made in solitude, even when the leader has numerous counselors. The perfect leader is one who willingly takes on the responsibility for advancing or retreating, and accepts the consequences. If the leader is not seen to have the courage required to act on behalf of all, the leader will lose the confidence of the group, and ultimately the position of leadership itself.

Finally, the perfect leader must impose discipline, in the classic sense of teaching followers the correct path. Discipline is not simply exercising control and punishing those who fail to obey instructions. Discipline is guidance, structure, training; without it, no one can lead effectively.

Sun Tzu pointed out that each of the qualities he mentions as essential for leadership can lead to excess and abuse. It is only by balancing the proportions of these qualities that the leader can attain maximum effectiveness. We hope that in reading and contemplating the principles in this book, you will find your own personal path to leadership.

We would like to thank our publisher, Jamie Raab, and our editor, Rick Wolff, for their support of this project.

Leslie Pockell
Adrienne Avila

PART 1

Intelligence

Many people have ideas on how others
should change; few people have ideas on
how they should change.

Leo Tolstoy

It's amazing how many cares disappear
when you decide not to be something,
but to be someone.

Coco Chanel

The only real training for
leadership is leadership.

Anthony Jay

The ultimate leader is one who is willing to develop people to the point that they surpass him or her in knowledge and ability.

Fred A. Manske

A genuine leader is not a searcher for
consensus but a molder of consensus.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Do not go where the path may lead.
Go instead where there is no path
and leave a trail.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Forethought and prudence are the
proper qualities of a leader.

Tacitus

A true leader always keeps an element of surprise up his sleeve, which others cannot grasp but which keeps his public excited and breathless.

Charles deGaulle

Those who know how to win are more numerous than those who know how to make proper use of their victories.

Polybius

If a man does not know to what port he is
steering, no wind is favorable to him.

Seneca

I used to think that running an organization was equivalent to conducting a symphony orchestra. But I don't think that's quite it; it's more like jazz. There is more improvisation.

Warren Bennis

The first method for estimating the intelligence of a ruler is to look at the men he has around him.

Niccolo Machiavelli

The chief executive who knows his strengths and weaknesses as a leader is likely to be far more effective than the one who remains blind to them. He also is on the road to humility—that priceless attitude of openness to life that can help a manager absorb mistakes, failures, or personal shortcomings.

John Adair

Management is efficiency in climbing
the ladder of success; leadership
determines whether the ladder is
leaning against the right wall.

Stephen R. Covey

One of the tests of leadership is to
recognize a problem before
it becomes an emergency.

Arnold Glasow

There's nothing more demoralizing than a
leader who can't clearly articulate why
we're doing what we're doing.

James Kouzes and Barry Posner

There are no mistakes so great as
that of being always right.

Samuel Butler

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