

Executive Summary: Tony Blair

Maximum Impact Simulcast

Leadership That Inspires

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During my ten years in office, I learned to have the courage to lead. At first, I wanted to please all of the people all of the time. But when you're governing that's impossible. You have to do what you believe is right. You can't follow the air of public opinion; at times you even have to challenge it.

Leadership is the same from teachers to coaches to entrepreneurs. Every leader must be prepared to make a decision and assume responsibility for it, even when people don't like the decision, fight against it, and criticize your motivation for making it.

Leaders stand up when others stand back.

For me, the most important trait in a fellow leader wasn't charisma or brilliance, but reliability.

Leadership in tough times requires a particular manner of expression. First, be honest if you're going to have to make major changes. Second, inspire people that you can get through it.

I can't think of a single person in the top areas of life without these characteristics:

- 1) Self-belief
- 2) Hard work
- 3) Ability to rise from failure

Leaders give up the luxury of self-pity. You can't lead and moan at the same time. Leadership positions are voluntary. You chose to lead, therefore don't complain about the burdens of being in charge.

Action Plan:

- ✓ Make a "no-whining" pact with a fellow leader within your organization. Whenever either of you complains about the demands of your job, you owe the other person a dollar.
- ✓ Have a "So what?" criticism ceremony. Jot down the main criticisms leveled at you or your decisions during the past month. Once you've put them on paper, ceremonially burn them over a candle. This exercise is intended to remind you that being a leader invites criticism. People will disagree with you, and you need to be able to handle their disapproval.

