

Underrated Leadership Qualities

In a December 2015 Forbes.com article, Victor Lipman, author of "The Type B Manager: Leading Successfully in a Type A World," offers 5 underrated qualities from his experience as a corporate executive that can be of value for leaders navigating the daily hurdles of running a successful organization.

Calmness when making hard decisions

It's easy to make decisions, but not always easy to make good decisions. It's easy to go off half-cocked, not always easy to stay rational and logical in the heat of the moment. If a really tough emotion-filled decision can wait (at least a little while) it can be constructive to "sleep on it" and see how all the options appear from a well-rested perspective in the light of a new day.

Grace under pressure

The ability to perform well and with grace during hard times is extremely valuable in business. Anyone who's been around business for a while has seen how employees respond to leaders who grow quickly and unnecessarily agitated – and has also seen the respect accorded leaders who keep their cool and do the right thing in stressful situations. Handling stress effectively sets a positive tone for an organization.

Consistency

"A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds," is a famous quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson. Consistency can also be an asset when it comes to the management of other humans. Few qualities alienate employees more than leaders who go alternately hot and cold. Enthusiastic and encouraging one day, then distant and aloof (often driven by the stresses they're under) the next. Employees want leadership they can count on. Consistent behavior is the mark of maturity and self-confidence. It engenders trust, and trust yields productivity.

Persistence

Very little of lasting value in business is accomplished easily, on the first try. What usually matters far more is how one perseveres after disappointment. There's a great story of Thomas Edison's reaction as he watched a massive fire destroy his plant. "It's all right," he said remarkably calmly. "We've just got rid of a lot of rubbish." While such legendary persistence may be hard to muster, even smaller doses will always serve one well.

Judgment

Call it "experience," "seasoning," "business savvy" – whatever the term, they all add up to that hard-to-define but critical ability effective leaders use to make decisions that most often yield positive outcomes. With it, one's opinion will often be sought. Without it, one may well not be in a leadership role long.