

The Best Leadership Movies of All Time

Sports Movies

(It seems like every movie about sports, especially a team with a coach, has some great leadership moments.)

- ◆ ***Miracle*** — On building a team with the right players, and coaching each individual for their individual role
- ◆ ***Remember the Titans*** – On changing the culture of a team and a town (submitted by Dennis Jackson)
- ◆ ***Rocky*** – On overcoming all odds as an underdog (submitted by Dan Ward)

War Movies

(Battles create some of histories most fascinating leaders—even when circumstances force them to.)

Bridge Over the River Kwai – On how devotion to one goal can cause a leader to lose focus on the overall mission (submitted by Keith Drury)

A Bridge Too Far – On the effects of top leadership decisions in the trenches—and the implications of failure in war

Saving Private Ryan – On heroism and sacrifice for brothers-in-arms

We Were Soldiers – For examining the character Lt Colonel Hal Moore and his leadership (submitted by Mike Takas)

Great Escape – Amazing ingenuity, persistence and teamwork escaping from a Nazi prisoner of war camp (submitted by Justin J. Nierer)

Braveheart – Vision casting, overcoming all odds, inspiring other leaders, compromise, etc, etc. (submitted by A. J. Thomas)

Meeting Movies

(Some movies focus on leading a group of people, usually in a meeting, towards a decision—for good or ill.)

12 Angry Men – On changing the minds of others through conversation; the art of persuasion in a meeting

Conspiracy – On the tragic consequences of a meeting where power and genocide were up for grabs (submitted by Keith Drury)

How *Not* To Lead Movies

(Other movies about leadership at it's worst—here's how *not* to lead.)

The Second Chance – Michael W. Smith in a surprisingly good role as a bad leader (submitted by Keith Drury)

Office Space – On how not to lead an office culture, one of the most hilarious stupid bosses in movie history!

Star Wars Episodes I – III – For the Emperor/Anakin leadership manipulation dynamic (Submitted by Matt Guthrie)

Mentoring Movies

(Movies that show us a mentoring—mentee relationship and how it affects the leadership of one or both of them.)

Finding Forrester – On how mentoring and investing in the next generation frees us both.

Training Day – When you start to believe your own lies as a leader; ethics, cops & gangs in the streets of L.A.

Dead Poet's Society – Mentoring and dreaming for others (submitted by Dennis Jackson)

Bull Durham – On moving from doing oneself to teaching others (submitted by “Dvd Avins”)

Other Movies

(et cetera – movies that can't be categorized in the above)

A Few Good Men – The change from self-centered to selfless leadership (submitted by Pete Yoshonis)

The Lion King – Simba questions himself and then comes into his own

Forrest Gump – Doing the right things; the serendipitous (and lucky) side of having integrity (submitted by Dan Ward)

Return of the King – Aragorn as self-sacrifice; Gandalf as wise counselor; Frodo as conflicted decision-maker (this one has it all)

Ghandi – Yeah, it's *Ghandi*, 'nuff said.

The Passion of the Christ – Ditto, but *Jesus...* so all the more 'nuff said.

Cool Hand Luke – How leaders "pay the price" for others and can be trapped by their own image (Submitted by Keith Drury who posted other reasons in the comments beyond this)

The Matrix – Morpheus to Neo: "I can only show you the door, you have to walk through it"... analogy for evangelism or mentoring (Submitted by Derek Bethay)

Mr. Holland's Opus – While we're "doing" leadership, the most profound influence we have may be deeper than anything we can possibly measure. (Submitted by Dennis King)

Schindler's List – How sometimes a leader should shift his values and actions, and the lasting results of a leader adopting more virtuous values.

The Godfather – For Michael Corleone, it was all about development of a leader (submitted by Justin J. Nierer)

School of Rock – Team building, helping people find their proper place in the organization, being willing to give leadership and credit away (submitted by A.J. Thomas and Anonymous)