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**Leadership potential waiting to be tapped**

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Corporate bodies in India today are battling for the best leadership talent. Why? Because only those with excellent leadership skills can make combined improvements productivity, ethics, and employee well-being, to generate outstanding company performance. The saying: "Employees quit bosses not organisations" cannot be truer in the context!

Research reveals that while leaders may have different personalities, they commonly display certain major leadership qualities. Focus on these and you will hone your skills for true leadership.

Be authentic which means there should be no contradiction between what you say and what you do. Provide sincere and honest opinions consistently and always act with integrity. Great leaders recognise that their success depends to a large extent on the efforts of the people they lead. If your team takes a decision that goes against your conscience, speak up and state your values. Be confident without being arrogant. Bring out the best in people.

Delegate even if you are unsure of the outcome. It instils immense confidence, motivating them to perform better. Be tolerant of mistakes. Provide support without removing responsibility, to build ownership. Resist the temptation to take over — keep responsibility where it belongs.

**Grooming talent**

Be honest and aware of employee performance. Encourage employees to assess their weaknesses and potential. Pair less knowledgeable employees with experienced staff so the former can learn.

Confront issues not people and if a task has not been performed well, tackle the task/issue, not employee behaviour. Inform the employee, without confrontation, how the issue could have been handled. Form a habit of congratulatory mails. Every human likes to be recognised for his/her efforts.

Talk with employees who have low morale and create a positive ambience at the workplace. Never penalise any team member for failure. Be open to receiving feedback as a receptive leader creates an atmosphere of open and honest dialogue.

**Fostering team spirit**

Selecting talent to recruit the right person for the right job involves screening, identification, evaluation and selection of internal as well as external talent. Leaders get the best results by exercising personal leadership skills, not position power. Time and resource management plus effective budget allocation to meet your team's goals are required. The essence of good leadership is to set performance expectations and make employees accountable. Help people grow in a team, eschewing ego.

A good leader always owns up for failure and attributes success to the team. Good leaders create an ambience which makes people strive to give their best and rise above expectations. "Are leaders born or made"? While they appear to be "born", instances of the self-taught abound.