

# EFS SERVANT LEADERSHIP NEWSLETTER

"The greatest day in your life and mine is when we take total responsibility for our attitudes. That's the day we truly grow up." John C. Maxwell

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**TOPIC THIS ISSUE:  
A LEADER'S ATTITUDE**



## THE POWER OF ATTITUDE

BY: MICHAEL J. STABLE



Author and pastor, Charles Swindoll pointed out how important the right attitude is to lead.

He said:

*"The longer I live I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company, a church, or a home. The remarkable thing is that we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past. Nor can we change the fact that people will act a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10 percent of what happens to me, and 90 percent how I react to it. And so it is with you...we are in charge of our attitudes."*

A good attitude is an extra plus in life. It makes our lives better. And it also makes our leadership better, because leadership has less to do with position than it does disposition. The attitude or disposition of leaders is important because it influences the thoughts and feelings of the people they lead and come into contact with on a

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daily basis. Good leaders understand that a positive attitude creates a positive atmosphere, which encourages positive and productive responses from others.

If you asked me to identify the single most important aspect of a successful servant leader's attitude, it would be possessing a **whatever-it-takes mindset**. The invisible line that separates those who get things done from those who merely dream about them is an attitude to total commitment and ownership. Great leaders are sold out to achieving success—in the face of any problem—and willing to pull out all the stops to help the team and others to win!

We talk about thinking, acting, and behaving above the line. **Above the line the attitude is simple: See It, Own IT, Solve IT, Do IT!** In this time of crisis, Above the Line Leaders aggressively pursue solutions. You will never hear them say, "There is nothing we can do about it." Those are the words of someone with a victim's mindset and operate below the line.

Professor and expert on organizational behavior Robert E. Quinn wrote:

*"A victim is a person who suffers a loss because the actions of others. A victim tends to believe that salvation comes only from the action of others. They have little choice but to whine and wait until some good happens. Living with someone who chooses to play the victim role is draining; working in an organization where many people have chosen the victim's roles is absolutely depressing. Like a disease, the condition tends to spread."*

Unfortunately, the victim disease of *below the line attitude* has spread throughout America and the world. More and more people have slipped from a can-do above the line attitude to one of helplessness, hopelessness and despair.

**As leaders, disown "Below the Line Attitude Thinking!"** Disown any traces of helplessness and hopelessness and help your team and others do the same.

**Encourage and empower yourself and others to:**

1. Never make excuses
2. Create an "Above the Line" environment where people are expected to solve their problems. (See IT, Solve IT, Own

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IT, Do IT)

3. Model an “Above the Line” attitude of whatever-it-takes to your team and others
4. Provide and encourage training in personal growth and development that will help your team to succeed
5. Challenge people to take responsibility for their performance and how they handle challenge, crisis, and difficulties
6. Make everyone feel valued and important as part of the team
7. Give solid feedback after team members try to tackle challenge
8. Celebrate with team members who are succeeding
9. Give people increasing challenges to test their growth and give them wins

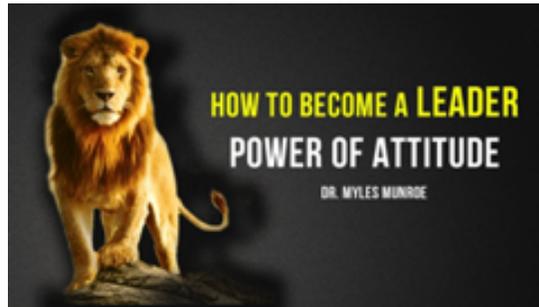
In our current situation, it may seem like a tremendous challenge to inspire people to give up their helpless and hopeless *below the line mindset*, but leadership is about modeling and different mindsets and providing hope. John Gardner, former secretary of health, education, and welfare, said, *“The first and last task of a leader is to keep hope alive—the hope that we can finally find our way through to a better world—despite the day’s action, despite our own inertness and shallowness and wavering resolve.”* Hope is the foundation of change. If we continue to hold hope high, and we help others to do the same, there is always a chance to move forward and succeed.



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# EMPOWER YOUR ATTITUDE: A SERVANT LEADER'S BE-ATTITUDE

BY: MICHAEL J. STABILE  
ADAPTED FROM MYLES MUNORE'S WRITING



There is nothing as powerful as

attitude. Attitude dictates your response to the present and determines the quality of your future. You are your attitude, and your attitude is you. If you do not control your attitude, it will control you.

Attitude creates your world and designs your destiny. It determines your success or failure in any venture in life. More opportunities have been lost, withheld, and forfeited because of attitude than from any other cause. Attitude is a more powerful distinction in life than beauty, power, title, or social status. It is more important than wealth and it can keep one poor. It is the servant that can open the doors of life or close the gates of possibility. It can make beauty ugly and homeliness attractive. The distinguishing factor between a leader and a follower is attitude.

**Attitude Creates Your World And Designs Your Destiny.**

**What is attitude?** *Let me simply define attitude as "the mind-set or mental conditioning that determines our interpretation of and response to our environments." It's our way of thinking. It is also important to understand that attitude is a natural product of the integration of our self-worth, self-concepts, self-esteem, and sense of value or significance. In essence, your attitude is the manifestation of who you think you are. Leaders think differently about themselves, and this distinguishes them from followers.*

We live our lives based on who we think we are. According to



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the illustration, if you believe in your heart that you are a sheep, then you will stay in the confines that others have placed you in or that you have made for yourself. If you think that you are a lion, then you will venture beyond manmade limitations and embark on the life of leadership that you were born to live. You will develop into someone who inspires and influences others within your inherent domain.

No amount of training in leadership skills, courses in management methods, power titles, promotions, or associations can substitute for the right attitudes. I am convinced that all the money in the world may make you rich, but it can never make you a leader. Your leadership development is determined by your perceptions of who you are and why you exist in other words, your sense of significance to life.

**The key to servant leadership is attitude not aptitude.** *“It is 20% technical knowledge and skills and 80% attitude.”* Ralph Waldo Emerson said, **“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”** How you define yourself is the single most important statement you can make about yourself, and it is the heart of attitude of the spirit of a Servant Leader.

**The following BE-Attitudes are habitual, intentional, and purposeful attitude dimensions to renew and transform the mind and journey of a Servant Leader.**

**BE OF HIGH SELF-VALUE** — A belief in one’s importance and destiny in the world.

**BE SELF-CONFIDENT** — A trust in one’s God given inherent abilities.

**BE SELF-CONTROLLED** — The practice of managing one’s self from the inside out.

**BE PATIENT** — A belief in the potential of change and the ability to wait for it in self and others.

**BE COMPASSIONATE** — A sensitivity to the worth and value of others.

**BE RESILIENT** — The ability to see failure as temporary and a necessary step to success.

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**BE PERSEVERING** — The ability never to give up or surrender to the context of a situation.

**BE COURAGEOUS** – The ability to transform one’s fear into a motivation for action and change.

**BE FOCUSED ON PRIORITIES** — The conscious application of time to priorities and what matters most.

**BE SELF-COMPETITIVE** — The practice of never comparing ones self to others but only what one has been or done before. Strive for personal growth and development.

**BE OPEN TO DIVERSITY** — A belief in the beauty and strength of variety and differences.

*As you examine the above list of BE-Attitudes which of these are already strength areas for you? Which of the above BE-Attitudes are areas that need to be developed? If you were to focus your attention on one or two of these areas for the next 60 days, which attitude dimensions would you focus?*

**Remember the development of a Servant Leader happens over a lifetime, but your future begins today!**

## **HUMILITY: THE WAY OF A LEADER**

BY: MICHAEL J. STABILE

ADAPTED FROM AN ARTICLE BY BILL MOWRY, THE WAYS OF A LEADER



In his fascinating study of how some businesses went from good to great, author Jim Collins found that **“good-to-great leaders never wanted to be larger-than-life heroes ... They were seemingly ordinary people quietly producing extraordinary results.”** They proved

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that humility is the ultimate self-confidence. The way of the leader is the way of humility.

In the Roman and Greek culture of the First Century, the commanding leader who towered over everyone else was the model of leadership. This model was epitomized in the grandeur and power of the Caesars. Imagine how radical, and weak-sounding, Jesus' call to servanthood and humility would have been in this culture. It would never enter the Roman mind to assume that the meek or humble would inherit the earth. The meek were the subservient slaves who slept outside the master's door, avoiding direct eye contact with the mistress or master of the house. The humble were trampled under by the power of the Roman Empire. Philosopher Simon Blackburn writes that "[humility] would have been unintelligible as an ethical virtue to ancient Greeks [and Romans]."

The word **"meekness,"** pictures a horse broken by a bit in its mouth. Meekness is also pictured as the small rudder of a ship whose power to steer is under the control of the helmsman. **Meekness is power under control. Humility is the power found in voluntarily putting self to death in order to live for others.** The humble leader has his or her power under control because they've experienced a sense of brokenness. Being broken is not at the top of most leadership development seminars but it is essential for growth and development. Brokenness is not humiliation or degradation; it is a process of replacing our allegiance to self with a focus on a higher source than self and willingness to serve others. Sometimes we have to learn the hard way, instead of a confidence that flows from accomplishment or power; the humble leader knows that his or her confidence flows from a secure relationship lived out through humility. Humility is the ultimate self-confidence.

**What does humility look like in leadership?** Author and CEO Max DePree writes that leaders **"do not grow by knowing all the answers, but rather by living with [and asking] the questions."** Questions place the burden of responsibility upon the follower or employee and not upon the leader. When humility is the ultimate self-confidence, a leader is not afraid of not knowing the answer. Not knowing an answer is an opportunity for mutual discovery and growth, not an indictment of a leader's performance.



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When humility is the ultimate self-confidence, a leader is not concerned with receiving credit or acclaim. Author and Pastor Chuck Swindoll writes how he was inspecting a photo on the desk of then-President Ronald Reagan and noticed a plaque with a saying prominently placed on his desk. Wondering what the President of the world's most powerful nation would draw inspiration from, he began an investigation of what was written on the plaque. What he discovered was a phrase from President Harry Truman, ***“You can accomplish anything in life, provided that you do not mind who gets the credit.”***

**The self-confident leader humbly releases others to succeed.** Releasing others is both exhilarating and difficult. It's a thrill to see another succeed but the tug of jealousy, the desire to claim the glory for myself, is difficult to irradiate. It's often a struggle to place another on center stage when we're fighting for the same role or acclaim. **Humility is knowing that we lead because we have nothing to gain, nothing to lose, and nothing to hide.**

