

LEADERS: Are you using your gifts? If not, read this article by Henry from monthly MAPP Newsletter (4/07)....

Go to the book section of Amazon.com, enter the keyword "leadership" and see how many hits you get. The last time I did this I got over 18,200 hits. Eighteen thousand two hundred! Why is there so much material on this one subject? The law of supply and demand would say it is because people are buying it. But I suspect there are other, more subtle reasons. One of those reasons is the underlying belief that leadership can be taught. With enough training, anybody can be a leader. The theory is that leaders are made, not born. Or are they? The other day a woman told me that she sees definite leadership traits in her son. I asked her how old he was. "Six," she replied. Too young to have been through any leadership training. So are leaders born or made? The answer is both.

The problem is that we often get fuzzy about what can and cannot be taught, and at the heart of the fuzziness is the difference between talent and skill.

Talent is what we do well naturally. It is our bent. Talents are inborn, and can be discovered and developed. They cannot be taught. However, skills can. Skills are simply how to do something. They are learned and transferable. When we confuse talent and skill, we set ourselves up for disappointing expectations from training.

What does this have to do with developing leaders? Everything. For example, the ability to create vision and strategy is a key leadership trait. Some people have a talent for it. They do it naturally and continually. Others don't. Both can learn some skills that will help them do it better. *The difference is that the one with the corresponding talent can be excellent at it, while the other one can be adequate at best. Talent is required for excellence. Who wants more "adequate" leaders?*

Here's the bottom line for developing your leadership potential: become the leader you are designed to be. Discover your natural motivational talents, and build on them. Volunteer for assignments and training that complement your natural giftedness. Get on the track to excellence by aligning your development with your talents. There are all types of leaders. Some rouse and inspire. Some organize. Some are strategic, and some tactical. Some spot opportunities, and some protect against disaster. All are needed in this world of ours.

What's the best type of leader to be? The type you were designed to be. Find out if you were born to lead by taking The leadership Test. If you prefer to let someone else lead, your MAPP and personality test will help you identify the type of leader you would prefer to work for. To take these tests, just log into the Assessment.com Member Center:

<http://www.assessment.com/MemberCenter/>