

# Smart Leaders: The Circle of Leadership

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Business Career How To Planner Tips & Tools

BY MARIN BRIGHT ON AUGUST 31, 2015



**Cultivating eight leadership qualities that can lead to success**



I love to learn! Some believe many good leaders are born not made, yet not many can remain strong leaders unless they constantly sharpen their skills and look for ways to grow. Any chance I get, I listen to TED Talks to watch great speakers share their knowledge, and I gain great inspiration. I am constantly looking for ways to keep my edge, whether it is reading self-help and leadership books or taking classes to keep me on my game.

I recently had the good fortune to attend the Meeting Professionals International World Education Congress in San Francisco and decided to continue my learning by attending Dean Savoca's session, "Increase Influence—Discover Eight Attributes of Successful Leaders." He was spot-on in his teaching and shared concepts that I believe in and try to live by. I am excited to share with you the key ingredients of any good leader. Savoca has a great style of engagement and runs Savoca Performance Group in Denver. He breaks out the top eight leadership qualities into The Wheel of Influence. For more on Savoca, visit – [www.savocaperformancegroup.com](http://www.savocaperformancegroup.com)

**1. Responsibility:** Every good leader takes 100 percent responsibility and shoulders the blame. I have a large staff and layers to my many departments. It would be so easy to slough off failures to middle managers and underperforming staff members, yet I understand that in order to fix something, I have to own it first. This is not always an easy pill to swallow.

**2. Have a Clear Vision:** This sounds easier than it is, and to be really clear, write things down in the present tense. I remember that when I was starting my company, I used to visualize constantly and wrote out my goals down to the minutest details. Guess what? My office and all the products we offer look like my vision. I was so clear about what I wanted and I am amazed that it came true!

**3. Demonstrate Balance:** This is the hardest one for me. I tend to go full speed ahead when I am passionate about something and throw all caution to the wind. I forget to eat right, sleep well, move my body enough—and the silly thing is, when I create more balance in my life it gives me more mojo for my passion.

**4. Focus on Strengths:** I heard years ago that we are much better at improving what we are already good at than trying to change an area of weakness. It is so easy to lead a team and focus on what is wrong, yet I have watched many teams bloom by focusing on what is right with them and playing to their strengths.

**5. Action Planning:** I love structure, and making action plans is right in my wheelhouse. I love to-do lists and moving my teams to execute a plan. We can all sit and talk about things until we are blue in face, but action is where the energy thrives.

**6. Courage:** It is not easy being at the top. It can be lonely and you often have to do and say what others will not to gain the respect of your team. I have had many conversations during which I thought a root canal would be more fun, yet there is no other way than facing obstacles head on, swallowing your fear and getting it done.

**7. Build a Successful Team:** I make a practice of hiring people who are smarter, more creative, better analysts...(the list is long) than I. I know in order for our company to thrive we must have the best talent on board. A mistake any leader can make is to be threatened by those who have honed a skill better than she. I know my limits and want to surround myself only with winners. I learn something from my team every day.

**8. Appreciate:** This is a simple, easy offering that is often overlooked. I am lucky because I am a natural giver and love to surprise my team with rewards and kudos. We call it “lightning strikes,” and give bonuses and perks when someone has done something great to show our appreciation for them. They say this goes further than money. I’m not sure about that, yet there is nothing better than seeing a staff member light up from recognition for a job well done.

Savoca reminded us during our fast hour together that it is easy to get busy and forget the building blocks to good leadership. I left feeling re-energized and reminded of the important qualities that sometimes slip my mind. I hope I have reminded you, too, that being a leader comes with great rewards and responsibilities.

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