



THE SECRET OF GREAT LEADERS

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What is humility?

“True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less.”

– C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

Genuine humility is a reflection of neither weakness nor insecurity. Instead, it implies . . .

- A respectful appreciation for the strengths of others
- A lack of personal pretension
- A more relaxed sense of confidence that doesn't require external recognition

Four reasons why we need to develop humility:

1. You're not _____ at everything.

2. You're not always going to _____.

“Listen more than you talk. Nobody learned anything by hearing themselves speak.”

– Sir Richard Branson

3. You're not always going to be _____.

4. You're not always going to _____ with how others do things.

Signs that you might have low confidence:

The *Confidence Code* offers up a great many anecdotes about how low confidence manifests itself. Here are a few telltale signs you might recognize:

You have a long list of all the things over the years that you wish you had said or done or tried – but didn't.

- You don't initiate salary negotiations – or if you do, you value your worth too low. (Studies with business school students found that men, who are traditionally more confident, initiate salary negotiations four times as often as women. When women do negotiate, they ask for 30% less than men do.)
- You hesitate at key moments.
- You imagine that whatever you have done – whether it's a triumph or a failure – is the focus of everyone else's attention.

Signs that you might be a bit overconfident:

- *Work your accomplishments* into the conversation.
- Don't focus on *what you don't yet know* or are seeking to learn.
- Express no curiosity about whom you're interacting with.
- Enter into interactions mostly for reasons of potential self-interest.
- "Treat servers, drivers, or other service personnel different than those you meet in a professional context." – Martin Babinec

Leaders who are graced with humility . . .

1. Say "I _____ know."

Three of the most powerful words you can say to a team: "I don't know."

"When leaders humbly admit that they don't have all the answers, they create space for others to step forward and offer solutions. They also engender a sense of interdependence. Followers understand that the best bet is to rely on each other to work through complex, ill-defined problems." – Harvard Business Review

2. Are _____ leaders.

"A leader is best when people barely know he exists. When his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say, 'We did it ourselves.'" – Lao Tzu

3. _____, _____, and _____ others to shine.

4. _____ their mistakes.

5. Seek _____ viewpoints.

6. Create an environment of _____.

Ask two questions:

- What am I doing well?
- What do I need to change or improve?

7. Reframe their view: _____ to _____.

Good to Great author, Jim Collins, offers up two points about the qualities of humble leaders that really resonate with me. The humble leader . . .

- Channels ambition into the company, not the self; sets up successors for even greater success in the next generation.
- Looks out the window, not in the mirror, to apportion credit for the success of the company – to other people, external factors, and good fortune.

"Our ego hinders our ability to influence more than anything else under our control."
– Michael McKinney