

## **Leadership Barometer 163 Great Leaders Are Enablers**

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Great leaders are enablers while poor leaders are barriers. You can tell a lot about the caliber of a leader by asking questions of people in the group. On this dimension, there is a stark contrast between great leaders and poor ones.

Great leaders ensure people feel like winners while poor leaders make people

feel like losers.

### **Great leaders show that greatness every day**

In organizations with great leaders, people view their leaders as enablers. They provide a clear and believable vision of the future that is truly compelling to the workers. They also involve the workers in the generation of that vision.

They provide the resources and support required to reach that vision. They encourage and empower people to put their best efforts into the journey toward success.

They are humble and not aloof. They gladly do their fair share of the work and make sure to coach any slackers. They remove people who cannot do their part.

They celebrate the small wins along the way. They make people feel respected and even honored to work there. If there is a problem, the leaders work to reduce or eliminate it. They are great problem solvers and make sure to minimize any blockages to getting things accomplished.

### **Contrast with poor leaders**

When leaders are weak, you see the exact opposite. Employees see leaders as barriers. They get in the way of progress by invoking bureaucratic hurdles that make extra work or waste time.

They use a command and control philosophy that stifles empowerment. People get the feeling that they are being used or even abused.

They insist on long large meetings that feel like purgatory. They are either mind-numbing or punishing.

There is a foggy vision or the vision is not that exciting to employees. If they struggle to make it happen, the result will not be so great.

For example, I felt that in my final years with a company I once worked for. The vision was very clear they had to shrink their way to success. This meant huge stress. More workers would be let go year after year. What an awful vision! I left and never looked back.

In these organizations, people feel they are operating with both hands tied behind their backs. This leads to poor performance, and so the leaders pour on more and more pressure to compensate. It is a vicious cycle that reminds me of the water funnel in a toilet. In fact, it is very much like that.

## **Conclusion**

If you want to measure the caliber of a leader, just ask some questions. Find out if people think that leader is an enabler or a barrier to progress. Their answer will tell you quickly how talented that leader is.

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