

Leadership Barometer 179 Rules for Success Robert T. Whipple, MBA CPTD



Many years ago, I generated a list of rules for success. It is important to write down a set of rules for yourself, just as it is to document your values. It gives you something to hang on to when there is a lot of confusion. The document represents a kind of credo you use to manage your life.

Another benefit of a list like this is that it helps other people know how you operate much more quickly. I used to review this list and my passion for each item whenever inheriting a new group. My new associates appreciated knowing in advance how I operated and what I valued.

I generated my list during more conventional times, before COVID. In today's environment, you might need to modify some of the items to reflect current conditions. I actually think most of the rules still apply, and maybe even more so. See what you think.

Key rules for success

1. The most important word that determines your success is **“attitude.”** It is how you react to what happens in your life. The magic learning here is that you can control your attitude, therefore, you can control your success.
2. Engagement of people is the only way to business success. How you engage depends on your situation.
3. Credibility allows freedom to manage in an “appropriate” way. If you are not credible, you will be micro-managed.
4. Build a “real” environment – **maximize trust.** It requires honesty and transparency.
5. Create winners. Help people realize their dreams of success. Always seek to grow other leaders.
6. Recognize and reward results at all levels. Reinforcement governs performance.
7. Operate ahead of the power curve. Be organized and get things done ahead of the deadline.

8. Avoid bureaucratic mumbo jumbo, negotiate the best position possible, out-flank the Sahara. However, feed the animal when necessary. Pick your political battles carefully.
9. Enjoy the ride and when it is no longer fun, leave.
10. Admit when you are wrong, and do it with great delight. Beg people to let you know when you sap them and thank them for it. Reinforce people who are candid with you.
11. Provide “real” reinforcement that the receiver perceives as reinforcing. Build a culture of reinforcement.
12. Keep trying and never give up. You will succeed.

Similar concepts

There are many other things that I could include. If you can master the things above, most other things become subcategories of them. For example, another bullet might be, “Treat people as adults and always demonstrate respect.” That is really a sub-item of the second bullet.

Or another bullet might be “Always walk your talk.” That is one thing, among many, you need to do for bullet four to happen.

Conclusion

I believe every leader should have a documented set of beliefs such as the one above. I am not advocating that you adopt my list. Think about it and develop your own list that is most suitable for your situation.

Don’t worry about being complete, just start an electronic file and add to it over the years as you grow and encounter new ideas. You will be amazed how this simple task enables you to operate with congruence and grow in your leadership skill.

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