

Stellar Leadership Podcast No.6 – The Five Fundamentals of Leadership

Welcome to the Stellar Leadership Podcast – Today we will introduce the Five fundamental steps that work for unlocking leadership. These five qualities can help anyone to become a strong leader. The model is simple and effective and designed to help leaders achieve immediate results. And helpfully the five steps all begin with the letter P. They are:

1. Personal Qualities
2. Positioning
3. Purpose
4. People
5. Performance

Here at Stellar, we are often approached by senior executives with the question, “can you come and help our managers to become better leaders?” Of course my first thought is to look to the senior executives themselves. More often than not, the performance of managers is driven by the culture and practice set by their leaders. Indeed, did this senior executive want his staff “to manage” or to *lead*?

The real problem is how to move beyond just behaving like a manager. You may be managing and doing, but you are not leading. Leading requires more than just managing the people and processes of an organisation. Many managers feel more comfortable doing what they always did - what is got them their promotion in the first place

This will not do. We need people to be energised and making a difference if our organisations are to succeed. We believe that this is possible. By applying our unlocking leadership model we believe that you can become a better leader and one who gets results for the organisation.

I will now take a closer look at each of the fundamentals in turn. The first fundamental, **Personal Qualities** is about how you behave as a leader. It is linked to being self-aware and conscious of your own behaviour and recognising that this has an impact on others.

Getting yourself into the leader zone will require you to develop a clear sense of purpose, engage with people in a way that they will want to work with you and get them to deliver on plans and get results.

The second fundamental is **Positioning**. People expect their leader to know what is going on and how to respond. This means being out there, getting to know the “who, what, how and when” of the surrounding environment and taking this back to the team to inform its strategy and plans. As a team leader perspective, you need to position your team within the bigger picture and this requires networking, social capital and strategic thinking.

Next we need to think about **Purpose**. As Covey tells us, start with the end in mind. To lead means to take people somewhere else, beyond the pressures of the present and the drag of the past.

Whilst each step relies so much on the others that it is difficult to highlight one as most important, it is also true that the first thing we will ask of a leader is: what is your purpose?; what is your vision for the future you are trying to create?. Having a clear sense of where you are intending to go, assuming it is desirable will be energising and motivating for others.

This is a really practical aspect of leadership. It is tied into having clear goals and a strategy that directs what people need to focus on. So, to be sure, if you want to lead you need to have a clear and meaningful sense of purpose and be able to explain this to those who you would want to follow you.

When a leader talks about the bigger picture and demonstrates belief in a future that they care about, followers become energised and engaged because they want to be part of it. Leaders must engage **people** which is, of course, our next fundamental.

Leaders involve people and show that they value their input. It is not about being best friends. It is about genuinely respecting team members' viewpoints, motivating them to work towards a desired future. When a manager starts to engage like this (with a future in mind) we would say they have moved into the leader zone.

Our experience tells us that without the foundation of good relationships, a team is vulnerable. Spending too much time in the management zone of action planning and delivery without preparing the ground with "purpose" and "people" can seriously impact on performance.

And really, this whole process inevitable will be judged on this final P – Performance. Leadership may start with purpose, but it ends with performance – delivery, execution and results. People are the bridge between the two. Performance is about delivery – taking action and getting results. The key to moving from manager to leader is to get delivery through others. Indeed, you can multiply this effect, not just by delegating tasks to others but by developing their own sense of leadership.

So, in summary, there are five fundamental areas that a team leader needs to give attention to:

- Personal Qualities
- Positioning
- Purpose
- People
- Performance

Treat them as checklist to work through as you prepare yourself for your leadership role. Pay attention to each of these areas and you will find yourself in the leadership zone.



If you would like more information on Leadership, or any of the topics discussed in this podcast, visit www.stellarleadership.com, where there is a wide range of downloadable materials on the practical application of leadership techniques.