Leadership is forever talked about as a positive attribute and yet too many of us think that leaders are born. The reality is that leaders are made. They are made by training, education and example.

We also tend to think of leadership as direct and overt. In this, the first of a three-part series, let’s focus on indirect leadership, i.e., leading by example as much or more than by telling people what to do.

There are many ways to exert indirect leadership and achieve desired and necessary results from people without looking over their shoulders. Here are several suggested methods.

**Develop A Vision.** Let people know what the outcomes of their efforts will be. Show the positive aspects. This provides something to work for and creates interest, enhances motivation and helps increase effectiveness.

**Build Self-Confidence.** Reinforce people’s belief in themselves; minimize their dependence on you by delegating authority, responsibility and accountability to the lowest possible level. Encourage people to make decisions on their own. As confidence grows, they’ll solve more problems without coming to you.

**Be Supportive.** By supporting efforts of others, a two-way communication is created. They will begin to try and understand situations from your point of view. This helps to build mutual respect and good working relationships.

**Hire Well-Trained People.** This creates a strong base of experience and ability and guarantees self-direction and achievement of results. If the supply of well-trained people is inadequate, then hire the “best athletes” and train them.

**Develop Good Team Norms.** When people work in a team that sets high standards and expectations of responsible behavior, they usually rise to that level. They will begin to put out extra effort so that the team can succeed. They want to do their part.

**Have Explicit Policies/Procedures.** People work best when things are laid out clearly. When they know what is to be done, they have a better sense of direction and can control their own performance. This also promotes a climate of fairness.

**Ensure Satisfying Tasks.** Assign jobs that result in measurable and meaningful outcomes. Try to avoid the routine and the repetitive. People need to know the results of their efforts.

**Provide Feedback on Performance.** Everyone wants to know how they’re doing. This leads to performance improvement and greater job satisfaction and creates another channel of communication. Most people will correct their performance when they know what they’re doing wrong.

**Provide for Participation.** The more people have input into their activities, the greater their commitment. They gain ownership, and this is the best guarantee that the job will be done. It is also a good means of tapping the expertise of the team and utilizing them more effectively.

About the Author
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