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Servant Leadership Presentation
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DEFINING THE SERVANT-LEADER

In Robert Greenleaf's seminal essay on "The Servant as Leader," he defined the servant-leader this way:

The servant-leader is servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions....The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.

WHAT EXPERTS SAY:

Stephen Covey is also a champion of servant leadership. He said:

The deepest part of human nature is that which urges people – each one of us – to rise above our present circumstances and to transcend our nature. If you can appeal to it, you tap into a whole new source of human motivation. Perhaps that is why I have found Robert Greenleaf's teaching on servant leadership to be so enormously inspiring, or uplifting, so ennobling.

Peter Drucker, in his book *The Effective Executive*, said that the key question that distinguishes an executive is the question: "What can I contribute?" Drucker said:

The effective executive focuses on contribution...He asks: 'What can I contribute that will significantly affect the performance and the results of the institution I

serve?' ...The focus on contribution turns the executive's attention away from his own specialty, his own narrow skills, his own department, and toward the performance of the whole...to the entire organization and its purpose. He therefore will also come to think in terms of the customer, the client, or the patient, who is the ultimate reason for whatever the organization produces.

Jim Collins, in *Good to Great*, described the highest level in his hierarchy of executive capabilities as Level 5. He said:

Level 5 leaders channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal of building a great company. It is not that Level 5 leaders have no ego or self-interest. Indeed, they are incredibly ambitious – but their ambition is first and foremost for the institution, not themselves.

Peter M. Senge is the author of *The Fifth Discipline* and a founder of the Society for Organizational Learning. In a talk published in *Reflections on Leadership*, he said:

I believe that the book *Servant Leadership*, and in particular the essay, "The Servant as Leader," which starts the book off, is the most singular and useful statement on leadership that I have read in the last 20 years. Despite the virtual tidal wave of books on leadership during the last few years, there is something different about Bob Greenleaf's essay, something both simpler and more profound...For many years, I simply told people not to waste their time reading all of the managerial leadership books. 'If you are really serious about the deeper territory of true leadership,' I would say, "read Greenleaf.'

In *The Servant-Leader*, James Autry listed the six things he believes about leadership:

1. Servant leadership is not about controlling people; it's about caring for people and being a useful resource for people.
2. Servant leadership is not about being boss; it's about being present for people and building a community at work.
3. Servant leadership is not about holding on to territory; it's about letting go of ego, bringing your spirit to work, being your best and most authentic self.
4. Servant leadership is less concerned with pep talks and more concerned with creating a place in which people can do good work, can find meaning in their work, and can bring their spirits to work.
5. Servant leadership, like life, is largely a matter of paying attention.

6. Servant leadership requires love.

John Stahl-Wert in his book *The Serving Leader* says that leaders:

- *Run to great purpose* by holding out in front of their team or community a “reason why” that is so big that it requires and motivates everybody’s very best effort.
- *Upend the pyramid* of conventional management thinking. They put themselves at the bottom of the pyramid and unleash the energy, excitement, and talents of the team and the community.
- *Raise the bar* of expectation by being highly selective in the choice of team leaders and by establishing high standards of performance. These actions build a culture of performance throughout the team or community.
- *Blaze the trail* by teaching Serving Leader principles and practices and by removing obstacles to performance. These actions multiply the Serving Leader’s impact by educating and activating tier after tier of leadership.
- *Build on strength* by arranging each person in the team and the community to contribute what he or she is best at. This improves everyone’s performance and solidifies teams by aligning the strength of many people.

Sources:

The Case for Servant Leadership by Kent M. Keith, The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership

The Serving Leader by Ken Jennings and John Stahl-Wert.