

# Effective Leadership



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Looking around, one can see that leadership is everywhere. However, people often disagree with each other as to what constitutes good leadership. "It is determined by how effective it is." "No, it is based on how efficient it is." "No, no, no, it is both, plus how happy the workers are at performing their respective tasks." Leadership is sophisticated and how it is interpreted influences others perspective of work as well as the way their success is measured.

Leadership is essential to day-to-day activities in the Coast Guard as well as the public sector. In fact, the study of what contributes to effective leadership is such a broadly researched topic that everyone from Graham Allison to Sigmund Freud to Max Weber has something to say on the subject. Despite the array of individuals with opinions on the subject, it is notable how they all arrive to the same conclusion: There is no single way to lead effectively, but many methods should be used so that the goals are accomplished.

Leadership is a study and must be educated through Scientific Management; a study in the efficiency of management. Our Officer and Chief corps (management/leaders) determine this by their individual perception, because every person would see it differently. The principles in the study of management should be used to lead workers and develop followership so that we can provide service to the public and for the public. We have 28 Leadership competencies, let's look at a couple:

**Respect for Others and Diversity Management:** Develop the science of management. Frederick Taylor was a person who believed that management started as a dictatorship. "Do it this way and only this way." Twenty-five years of experimentation later, not much changed. He believed that management should "assume a larger portion of the burden and to take primary responsibility for a scientific search for the best way of performing organizational tasks." (Fry, pg.53) By doing this, management can make itself more efficient before expecting the same of the workers. Unfortunately, government has done just this. It has taken on so much, thankfully more has not fallen through the cracks.

However, if we employ **Strategic Thinking**, we can equally divide the work and responsibility between management and workers. By empowering our people we allow members to become part of the overall solution, thus they can take ownership. This allows leadership to also hold members accountable because of their individual responsibilities to the organization. Final decisions are designed to satisfy at least part of the needs of each of the groups participating. We should always try to be **Politically Savvy** by concentrating on inter-group bargaining, power balances, and defined channels for group interaction. Effective leaders allow workers to use their experience to develop solutions to problems that come up. For Coast Guardsmen this is very important. Due to the scope of work performed, and the amount of people who must be assisted every day, employees must be allowed to be independent thinkers or little to nothing would get done.

**Human Resource Management:** Select and train workers. Max Weber was one of the front-runners in the area of public administration. He pointed the way to an ideal type bureaucracy by analyzing rational bureaucracy. He proposed that objectivity could be used to understand the meaning behind human action. Weber identified three types of authority; legal, traditional, and

charismatic, that created a level of respect for legitimate authority. He went on to mention, "Experience tends universally to show that the purely bureaucratic type of administration is capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency." Once efficiency is maintained, effectiveness can be achieved. Leaders are often misunderstood and most often criticized for the work they contribute. In order to **Lead Performance and Change** we should free ourselves from the limitations we place on routine obstacles and stop limiting our perspectives. By doing this, leaders are allowed to lead employees to serve the public with greater effectiveness.

**Vision Development and Implementation:** Bring science and workers together. One thing that cannot be stressed enough is the importance of consensus among leaders. Cyrus the Great states, "Diversity in counsel, unity in command." This is never truer than in public sector jobs. Leaders not only have to have to listen to others, even those who criticize their ideas, but they have to select the appropriate course of action. After this, they have to mobilize and motivate the organization to implement it effectively. For the Coast Guard this means correcting what is wrong and adhering to our core value of **Devotion to Duty**. Most importantly, do not give tacit approval by turning a blind eye to rules "we don't agree with." This will create a kind of blind devotion that jeopardizes the level of commitment that is needed to ensure day-to-day and future programs in the Coast Guard.

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