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# STUFF

# SWC CONSULTING

SKILL, WILL & CONSCIENCE

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Yes folks, it's back to my favourite topic – LEADERSHIP. As I've written to ad nauseum, we have an abundance of management but managers who actually lead are a rarer breed. The ones who do, stand out vividly in my memory. In business, in the community and especially in politics (don't get me started) we could do with more leaders. I'm going to spend the rest of the page illustrating what I believe is the simplest connection I know between the desire to manage and the job itself. So, a hypothetical person starts out with the goal of getting into management at some point. So what they seek is 'authority'. Here's some thoughts on how to do it and then how to retain it and grow. The ultimate formula lies in the very English language itself. Let's dig in.

The image to the right may well be an example of a picture being worth 1000 words. If your goal is to manage, what you're doing is pursuing authority. This is a mistake. You need to pursue authenticity. The individual on the top knows this and does not require a title or a business card to do what he or she is doing. Only the consistent willingness to do it is required. Authenticity is by definition consistent. You can't be authentic occasionally. Many try when they hear about the management vacancy that they want to apply for. They switch to "can do mode." That switch is clearly noted by the powers above and a sensible decision in my book would be to overlook that applicant in favour of the colleague who is consistently in "can do mode." So, the rule here is simple – "pursue authenticity with a view to achieving authority." Here's an example of the truth being in the language. I'll explain it in a minute.



**HIRING TIP:** Always look for leadership qualities beyond the credentials you might find in a resume or testimonial. These can only be found in one's character; rather than the personality. Character isn't always immediately apparent at the job interview. Therein lies the danger because if you hire on the strength of the personality, what you're stuck with long term, is the character. It's like going to see the movie on the strength of the trailer. You see only the best bits in the preview. Or, a first date is no guarantee of a happy marriage. Look to the reasons why if you notice high job transience. If you're recruiting for a management role, take a look at the home. I'm not seeking opulence here. If the edges are done, the garden is neat and there's no hillbilly couch on the front verandah, odds are that the database will be tidy and the showroom will be maintained because how you do anything is usually how you end up doing everything. If you're looking for a troubleshooter, be careful how they shoot trouble. Your team's morale will decline along with results and an increase in staff turnover if you hire a tyrant. And I'll bet they've had more starts than Phar Lap. Essentially good leaders tend to be effective handling people whereas good managers tend to efficient handling things. In the words of a great friend, leader and colleague, Ross Gray, "the best farmers have the muddiest gumboots." Get out from behind the laptop and set examples. Leadership 101.

Character  
vs  
Personality



**CAREER TIP:** Here's where the best tip is the most obvious and it's the connections that are highlighted in the English language itself. If your goal is to be in management or if you're currently a manager and looking to be a great one, seek to emulate the qualities of an entrepreneur. Not all business people are entrepreneurs but all entrepreneurs are business people and usually the best leaders. What defines the difference between them is how they handle change. Great businesspeople adapt to change or embrace it, or learn from it etc. If you're a regular reader, you'll know that I contend that the best way to handle change is to CAUSE or CREATE it. That's what entrepreneurs do. Consider perhaps the greatest few we've seen in the last 100 years; Musk, Branson, Jobs and Disney. Passionate visionaries with unshakeable will and a dedication to consistent improvement. Disney's motto was "if you can dream it, you can do it." Branson famously said, "train them so they can leave – treat them so they won't want to." Add to that, Soichiro Honda's motto of "challenging conventional wisdom" or Toyota's pursuit of "Kaizen." Creating change right there. Disney and Jobs were renowned as hard bosses but they set examples from the front. In history, the Carthaginian general Hannibal was not a nice man but I don't think niceness got many elephants over the Alps but again, he did it from the front – not from the tent. So, we may never be a Musk or Branson but it's commencement that counts. Then you never know where your development might take you. Take a chance with change. Set examples by the spirit of the way you work. Be the "go to person." Exercise integrity and you'll be seen as authentic. Do this long enough and you'll soon be recognised and handed authority. Now to the secret in the language. The root word of "authentic" and "authority" is "author." Consider the literal meaning of the word, "author." It means "creator." Do you know why most people don't cause change? It's simply a problem with commencement. Few know where to start. Those that do are said to have initiative. In other words, the ability to initiate. Commencement is difficult. That first workout, morning run or day of the new diet. The secret is consistency rather than intensity. You can't do one 8-hour workout and notice a new muscle but forty minutes a day for two months or so and there it is. Crash diets usually slingshot soon enough. You can't pinpoint the instant the muscle appeared but it did appear thanks to consistency and being consistent is the cornerstone of your character. Personality can alter due to situations you find yourself in or circumstances that effect your mood but your character will determine how you engineer outcomes despite tough situations and difficult circumstances. Pressure will always reveal character. If you have (or can develop) the will to learn and practice and take sensible chances, you'll develop skills. The connection here is that your experience will be evolutionary rather than repetitive. Allow your conscience to be your guide and it will prevent your will from making you a tyrant and your new skills from making you a show pony. The connections here are consistency and awareness. As Rachel Hunter said for Pantene, "It won't happen overnight but it will happen." Having a vision sure helps too. Just do it!



**BE THE BENCHMARK BY CONSISTENTLY DISPLAYING HUMILITY, GRATITUDE, MERCY, FORGIVENESS, ENTHUSIASM, CURIOSITY AND A WILLINGNESS TO CONTRIBUTE. THEN OTHERS WILL SAY, "HOW MUCH LIKE HIM OR HER CAN WE BE?"**