

**Leaders
Made
Here**

Network marketing is THE leadership business. What we do for a living is bring out the best in people. And rather than speak about that as an intellectual concept, I thought I'd show you exactly what we do to make a leader. That's the best way I know for you to really understand.

*True leaders don't create followers,
they create more leaders.*

—Tom Peters

Tonight belonged to Ann.

After eight years in network marketing, supporting her team, attending every training, and participating in all she could in spite of a busy schedule, a full-time job and a hectic family life, she had never been asked to share her story before. Not once! Ann had just joined our team from another company. She is an immigrant to this country and simply lacked the confidence to ask to be heard.

Ann had prepared handouts and knew just what she was going to say. The excitement she felt about being asked to participate for the very first time was palatable. Those of us who knew her could tell she was nervous. Our job was to smile encouragement in her direction.

The small gathering of eight included two first-time guests. Ann's story was an exceptional example of the success of our products. However, it was not the content, or the carefully designed handouts that moved the group. It was the animation and excitement she showed as she shared her story.

Afterward, everyone told her what a great job she had done and how interested they were in the information she presented. The smile did not leave her face the rest of the night.

Goal accomplished. After eight years of incubating, a leader had emerged.

How could someone not have seen the potential in Ann? Why was she passed over all this time, and more importantly, what changed? Why was she in front of this group, this night?

As the Leader of The Global Success Team, I brought nine years of experience and a strong team to Shaklee in 2004, following the bankruptcy of Excel Communications, my former network marketing company.

After the first year, I became concerned that our team was not uncovering new emerging leaders. Since we brought a lot of proven talent to the new company, we didn't put "beginners" in front of new prospects. Only the "best presenters" publicly presented information. There was no forum for budding leaders. As a result, we were sponsoring a lot of new members, but we were stagnant in producing anyone new in a leadership role.

So, we set out to find new ideas and formats designed to provide every person a forum to become the leader they desired to be. We examined our own process as well as business fundamentals for a solution.

We did not need to know WHAT to do when you are a leader; we wanted to

know HOW to develop leadership skills in people who did not see themselves as leaders yet.

A look back at my own emergence as a leader helped me to understand what was missing.

Growing up, I was very shy. Sandwiched in the middle of ten children, I followed the lead of my older brothers and sisters and rarely put myself out front. I had a safe place to hide, with no conflicts. So why change anything?

But something inside me was shouting to be heard.

It started with a grandmother who made me feel special every day. It took many years and much patience on her part, but she finally convinced me that I could do anything I chose in life.

My father continued the process as he worked on my character, which was often at the expense of being unable to sit comfortably for a while. He recognized something special in every one of his children and often told me, "You can be the president of the United States one day, if you want to." He offered me experiences in life that told me he trusted me.

What he also taught me was to never lie, steal, or cheat anyone.

If I followed these simple rules and worked hard, I could get along with almost anyone and would be successful in whatever I tried, because people would trust what I had to say.

This turned out to be valuable advice I still subscribe to today.

When I reached high school, I finally decided to stick my toe in the waters of leadership. I was pretty bad at it. In fact, I was terrible. But I had one high school teacher who saw something in me I did not see in myself. Every time I tried, she would tell me, "That was really good. You are going to be a real leader one day."

What was it really that my grandmother, my father, and a very special teacher gave me? I have to boil it down to two things: experience and confidence.

You see up to that point, I had not succeeded, because I had never really tried for fear of failing, or worse yet, being laughed at.

You cannot consistently perform in a manner, which is inconsistent with the way in which you see yourself.

— Zig Ziglar

So, where does that confidence come from? We boiled it down to three ingredients:

Know what you are talking about.

Not everything about it. Just enough about the subject you will be sharing for the time you will be speaking. When you listen to great motivational speakers, realize that most of them give the same speech over and over. They are great, in part, because they know their subject inside and out.

Practice. Practice. Practice.

If you have done it well in front of the mirror or a friend, you know you can do it.

Begin with people you trust.

A small group of friendly distributors is a great beginning. Eventually (after you know you are not going to die when you speak in front of a group), you can expand your subject matter and then gradually expand your audience.

I started my network marketing career in Fairbanks, Alaska. Being the very first distributor in the state, there was no local support of any kind. What seemed to be a disadvantage at the time proved to be a valuable lesson in leadership. Not knowing where to begin, I just started inviting people over to my house and we tried to figure it out together.

We laughed much more than would be acceptable in most networking circles today, but more and more people kept joining the team.

We shared the leadership role, and everyone took part on a rotating basis. We didn't take ourselves too seriously, so mistakes were not only permitted, they were expected.

By the time we were able to get a network marketing “pro” from our upline to come up to Alaska, our team had grown in excess of 200 people. He told us we had been doing it all wrong and that only the BEST speakers should present and the rest of us were just there to support that speaker.

Eventually, after trying the suggestions of the professional, our team stopped growing. It nearly killed our business. So we went back to our less formal meetings, and the business began to grow again.

I'm not promoting disorganization. We were using a structure that allowed everyone to participate at the level they sought and provided a forum for them to do so. Of course, when we

conducted a big citywide meeting, we put the best presenters in front of the room. And you know how they learned to be the best.

Now that our team understood the problem, how were we going to develop a comfortable atmosphere that provided confidence-building experiences, so team members would begin to see themselves as emerging leaders?

We have team members in fifty states and four countries, so it had to be duplicatable at every level and circumstance. We decided on a two-pronged approach.

Create a program that offers an opportunity for new distributors to practice their leadership skills in a friendly environment.

Start them in a small group format and continue to build confidence in their ability to lead a growing team.

We devised a weekly meeting plan that was intended to be used for small in-home meetings, where a simple and duplicatable agenda would give every representative who was interested an opportunity to lead a short portion of the meeting and practice their speaking and leadership skills.

The outline was flexible and designed to last about fifty to sixty minutes.

There would be up to five presenters, each following the agenda for time and content.

Our agenda went as follows:

- Personal Story of Host or Team Member – 5 minutes
- Recognition – 5 minutes
- Product Introduction – 10 minutes
- Opportunity – 20 minutes
- Motivational Talk – 10 Minutes
- Close

Each portion is given by a different person each week so that eventually each distributor learned the six components that compromise a complete meeting. We encourage fun and laughter, and when someone makes a mistake, we have them just tell the guests...

“See, anyone can do this business.”

Not long after learning all six segments, people are encouraged to consider hosting their own event and start building emerging leaders on their own personal team. A more experienced upline leader is encouraged to attend and support their new meetings for the first few weeks, if needed.

Since these are conducted in home environments, there may be only five to ten participants, so there's no need to be nervous about the size of the group.

Usually 50 percent of the audience is comprised of people they know, like, and trust who are experiencing the same training, so they are very supportive of one another.

After the meeting ends, the rest of the team makes sure to lift up each speaker. There is no place for criticism, and each person feels like they contributed to the success of the event.

The outcome speaks for itself: We are, again, bringing out new business leaders on the team. It is most heartening to see names that have been around for over a year all of a sudden breaking out in one or two months time after starting their own meeting.

They know what to do. They know how to do it, and they are in an environment friendly to their learning process.

Now it is up to the individual to decide whether they want success enough to move out of their comfort zone.

You'll be pleased to know that Ann is starting her own meetings. I have complete confidence that she will be a great leader, because she understands the goal is not only to gather customers and team members for her business, but to offer leadership opportunities to all those who want them.

***Life's battle does not always go
to the stronger or faster man;
But soon or late, the man who wins
is the one who THINKS he can.***

— Author Unknown

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