



revolutionaryleadership
i n s t i t u t e

Elite Leadership Traits ©

One might ask what I believe is common to great leaders or “elite” leaders... If you notice the focus of my work, in my research and observation, truly elite leaders show a high degree of certain traits, some more than others, but all of these traits are present.

It is important to add that I believe that these traits are part of who the person is; they are embedded into their being. These traits must be present to some degree in anyone who aspires to be an elite leader. The basic traits however, can be developed or drawn out in order for one to enhance their leadership capability.

- Charisma – the ability to attract others, build trust quickly and develop relationships with others in such a way that others easily follow them
- Environmental Sensitivity/Emotional Intelligence – the innate ability to put one’s self in another’s shoes and the ability to understand how those around him/her are affected by the current circumstances
- Strategic Thinking/Outsider Perspective – defined as having an outsider’s perspective and an insider’s knowledge of the situation and the ability to make decisions, set policy and lead based on the combined perspective and knowledge
- Flexibility – willingness to take risk, make sacrifices and continually adjust to the environment
- Empowerment Orientation –this leader respects the input of others as well as works to seek it out - further, is able to relinquish control (while retaining responsibility) to others so they may react more quickly in the service of the overall goals of the organization
- Vision – the ability to look out to the horizon and identify the direction that must be taken, turn it into a story (a picture of the end-game) and articulate it clearly

- Grit/Drive – personal resilience, the ability to come back time and again against obstacles in the way of one’s success and overcoming those obstacles
- Maintains a Learning Organization – The leader is in constant learning mode in an effort to stay in front of his/her followers and is able to be the consummate teacher, coach and mentor to his/her followers so that the organization is constantly evolving forward.

It is through the conscious identification and development of the traits that one moves from aspiring to elite!