

## CHARACTER/INTEGRITY

# Leading from Within



by Greg Giesen

MUCH LIKE THE lighthouse that provides guidance and direction for sea-bearing vessels, we can become beacons of light in our own lives in order to lead others effectively.

True leadership is not about a title, position, genetic make-up, education, or socio-economic status. Leadership is a way of being. Effective leaders lead by a set of core values that reflect who they want to be as well as the contribution that they want to make. They show up in all endeavors as the same people, guided by the same principles. They lead with integrity, passion, and commitment to making a difference.

In *Leadership From the Inside Out*, Kevin Cashman writes, "Who we are says much about us as leaders."

The following steps are critical in leading from within:

**1. Be "on purpose."** First identify your core values, purpose, and personal leadership vision. These three components together form the road map which guide and direct you daily in all facets of your life. You can then transform these principles into your values, purpose and leadership visions at work.

**2. Be accountable to others.** This involves creating accountability and support around these principles. To do this, you need to share your values, purpose, and visions with those around

you, at work and at home. By enrolling people in this process, you create not only a support system for yourself but also a feedback loop that empowers people to let you know when you move away from your vision.

**3. Lead with integrity.** The everyday actions of leaders must be aligned with their values, purpose, and personal leadership vision. Being inconsistent or casual about their vision will quickly sabotage any previous efforts made toward self-improvement. Inconsistency can also breed distrust, both internally and externally. Leaders must consistently show up as the person they have declared themselves to be.

**4. Make your leadership development an ongoing process that involves a continuous improvement plan.** This might involve seeking out feedback regularly or taking skill-based classes and workshops. Revisit your personal leadership vision bi-annually and make necessary revisions. When you stop learning, you also stop growing.

**5. Be accountable to yourself.** Hold yourself accountable by asking yourself three powerful questions daily: 1) What did I do today to demonstrate my commitment to my values, purpose, and vision? 2) What did I learn about myself today that will help me become a better leader tomorrow? And 3) How do I need to show up tomorrow to make a difference with those I come in contact with?

These five steps can assist you in becoming a better leader in your life at home and work and wherever else you show up in the world. PE

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**ACTION:** Declare your leadership values and ask for ongoing feedback.

