PROSPER

PROFESSIONAL COACHING

WINNING QUALITY # 2:
A Leader Should Be Willing to Take Responsibilities.

Who would forget the ever-famous line of Peter Parker's grandfather, "With great power comes great responsibility." The society expects Spiderman, a comic book, TV, and movie superhero, to be responsible for saving his town, or even the world, in some instances, from evil because he has super powers. From all the episodes he appeared in, he never let us down. With the power he possesses, he makes sure to be responsible in using it for the good of the people around him.

Leadership is not at all different from being superheroes. Yes, you may not have super powers like Superman and Spiderman, but you have the authority to lead other people towards success. This is so much greater and stronger since it is a power that can be used by real people in this real world.

Hence, being a leader requires great sense of responsibility, the second quality a successful leader should attain. The power to lead your people towards aiming your vision comes with responsibilities like making sure they are on the right direction, being aware of each and everyone's tasks and mistakes, and putting them back on the right track when they get lost.

Who said it is easy to be a leader? Well, it is not…It comes with tons of responsibilities. True leaders are willing to accept them all.

There are instances where sometimes it makes us feel better to blame somebody or something else when something goes wrong in a task. However, this should not be practiced, especially by a good leader!

A leader should take full responsibility of a task - not just before he accepts to take it, but also after it has been accomplished. As much as he is responsible for his team's success, he should also be responsible for any failure. He represents the whole team so whatever happens to it, he is the one responsible.

Making excuses and blaming something or someone else for failed jobs is not a quality of a good leader. What he should do, instead, is to accept the fact that something went wrong with the organization, even if it is not his fault. It is normal to make mistakes. In fact, mistakes are opportunities to learn something better. As a leader, he must ensure that the team members learn from these mistakes and that these errors will not be repeated next time.

You may not have full control over other people and are not expected to have full control over their actions, but you have full control of your own reactions. Knowing what to do over unexpected and unpredictable situations will make you responsible, hence giving you the feeling of power.

Bringing Out the More Responsible You

Sometimes, we never get leadership and trust from people more authoritative than us – because, according to them, we are just not "responsible enough." What is the measure of being "responsible enough"? Below is a list of steps on how to draw responsibility out of our shells:

1. **Develop self-awareness.** As a leader, you should know your own strengths and weaknesses to be able to view your behavior objectively. Also, recognize your shortcomings, open yourself to feedback, and make changes when necessary. When you are aware of yourself and your personality as a whole, you will know what tasks you should engage in and what situations you feel you are not capable of handling.

Dr. Gerald Bell, business consultant and professor at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C, advises us on how to expand our self-knowledge, "Study yourself closely and practice self-assessment techniques to learn how you behave and the effects you have on others. Ask others for their opinions or criticisms and what you can do to become a better leader."

2. **Do not equate responsibility with worry.** When we hear the word responsibility, we often think to ourselves, "another task, another problem!" However, responsibility is more than worrying about things given to us to work out. Consider this short story:

> One night at the end of the second shift, an employee walked out of the plant and passed the porter. As head of operations, he had started his day at the beginning of the first shift. The porter said, "Mr. Smith, I sure wish I had your pay, but I don't want your worry."

The porter equated responsibility and worry. Perhaps he does not want to carry the office work home like what he does as a porter. This is not reasonable, especially if you want to become an effective leader.

Say, the vice-president of a prestigious company and the porter are paid the same money, who would you want to be? Carrying responsibility should not intimidate you, because the joy of accomplishment – the feeling of helping other people – is what leadership is all about.

3. **Take risks.** Effective leaders have the courage to act in situations where results and success are uncertain. They are willing to risk failure. In doing this, you always have to be prepared. Analyze the situation and your options. List the pros and the cons for each option you have, and then assign each choice a risk factor rating from 1 to 5. Next, determine the likelihood that each outcome will occur. This will help you know how much risk you are willing to take.

Also, do not expect perfection. No one is perfect. In fact, leaders grow by making mistakes.

4. **Be ready to admit your mistakes.** Everyone makes mistakes. It is normal. Avoid making excuses and blaming others for something you did wrong. Admitting your mistakes and failures will even make people respect you more, as you are true to yourself.