

Imagine you were presented with an opportunity
to speak in front of an audience of leaders
who were just starting out on their leadership

No. 1: Cultivate Composure

Nobody likes to be led by a short-fused hot-head.
Emotions are powerful things, and you'll do a lot

I am not one who believes that there are natural leaders or that people are natural born leaders. I truly believe leadership is developed and learned through a combination of association and study. My aim with this article is to focus on the development of leadership through my associations, such as the ones I had through my mentorship relationships. Mentorship is an excellent leadership development tool because there is an established and validated level of trust from which to develop an individual.

My first mentor was a man who became my father when I was 6 years old. While I do remember our initial meetings and interactions, there was nothing really special or memorable about those interactions as most were with other relatives and in group settings. He was just another adult for me to listen to and treat like any adult who had entered into my life. For me, this changed the day that I was officially adopted. When we left the court, we went to one of his relative's home where I had a broiled hamburger, with mayonnaise, mustard and relish on it. As I had never had such a hamburger, I said to myself that I was going to do whatever my new father said. In retrospect, this was truly my recognition and the importance of the principles of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. For whatever reason, I knew/assumed that my basic needs would always be taken care of.

Simply said, I was my father's project. It was made perfectly clear to me on an on-going basis that there was only one option for my performance whether it was in school, menial jobs or even with household chores-- excellence was the only option. I was to do whatever I did, to the best level that I could do it. While knowing that my efforts could, should and would be judged, I learned that my best effort had to be better than anyone else's. While he was my father, he was more like a mentor, as there was not a lot of loving physical contact such as hugging, kissing or hand holding. His goal was to develop me. The main performance principle that I have even today is whatever I do, I do it well and do it to the best of my talents, abilelfv I hhatn.dm De betteest of m

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She commissioned the construction of a number of impressive structures, such as the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri, which was considered one of the greatest architectural achievements of ancient Egypt.

3. Leaders must focus on the task but also lead with the heart.

The statue often referred to as “Khafre Enthroned” is one of the most significant and iconic surviving sculptures from ancient Egypt (Newman, 2023). The statue portrays the Fourth Dynasty (ca. 2500 BCE) pharaoh Khafre slightly larger-than-life and seated upon a lion-pawed throne. The sides of the throne are decorated with the sema-tawy (translated as “Uniter of the Two Lands”) hieroglyph, meant to represent the king’s duty to literally “bind” the constituent parts of Egypt together under one authority. With a sense of calmness, Pharaoh Khafre sits atop with a right clenched fist and a left opened hand. Some believe the clenched fist symbolizes power, control, and might, while the opened hand symbolizes kindness.

The Khafre Enthroned statue and the symbolism of his hands reminded me of the two main distinct behavioral roles of leaders that were defined by Ohio State Leadership Studies (Stogdill, 1950): (1) Initiating structure or task-oriented leadership expresses the degree to which the leader focuses on goal achievement; and, (2) Consideration or relationship-oriented leadership focuses on the degree to which the leader shows concern and respect for his/her followers. Which leadership style is the best for your team? It depends. Effective leaders must adapt their leadership style to the situation (Wharton Online, 2023). For example, an authoritative leader works best when the leader is competent to take charge and the followers already have the tools needed to do effective work. While an empathetic leader

focuses on creating strong emotional bonds with the team. Empathetic leadership can be effective when little direction is needed from the leader and the team will benefit most from space and independence.

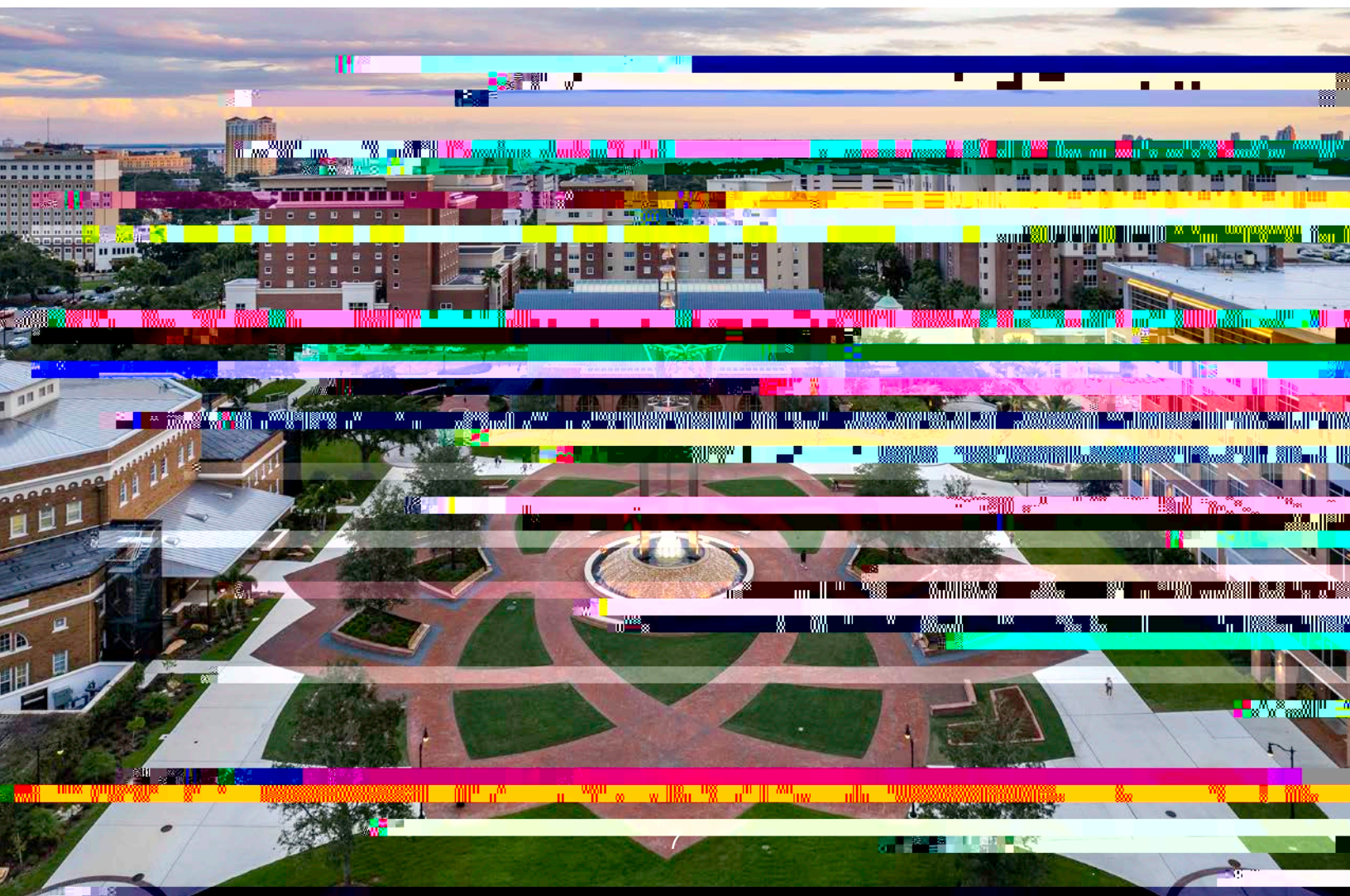
As in the ancient Egyptian times, in general, when both task-oriented leadership goes hand in hand with relationship-oriented leadership, the magic will happen. More recently, a webinar by McKinsey & Company (2021), however, stresses that we must change the way we lead in a post pandemic world and highlights the importance of providing team members with support at an emotional level. Leaders should focus on being kind, thankful and positive. Similarly, a recent Harvard Business Review article outlines several leadership paradoxes for the post-pandemic era which highlights that leaders need new skills during post-pandemic times. For example, leaders must be humble heroes, great listeners, and champions of inclusivity, while willing to make bold decisions. They must also be tech-savvy humanists and implement new technologies, while understanding and caring for their people (Leinwand, Mani & Sheppard, 2021). Just as the times of ancient Egypt, leaders today need to remember the symbolism of leading with a clenched fist and open hand. As the pharaohs of the past, leaders today need to possess a “brave powerful heart(s)” in taking decisions and commands (Mohamed,

TAMPA BAY LEADERSHIP

A PUBLICATION OF THE TECO ENERGY CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP

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