

POWER 20

IN THEIR WORDS

Ascending the ladder takes eight steps

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20**



KENNETH R. BANKS
President
Banks Contracting Co.

Becoming a leader is similar to most of life's endeavors where consistent practice over time yields positive results.

It may be true there are people who are born to lead, but it's certain that even among those few, their skills and knowledge were sharpened and improved to achieve proficiency.

If one aspired to be the leader of a business or organization, how better to understand leadership than to study and emulate the habits and qualities of the world's great leaders.

In my nearly three decades as a business entrepreneur, I have had the occasion to work with the CEOs of leading business organizations. Although their backgrounds, education and demeanor vary widely, all of them possess unmistakable similarities of practice that have guided them to the top.

Their persistence, confidence, vision, commitment and problem-solving skill elevated the people around them — and thus their business or organization.

Yet, the acquisition of these skills alone is not enough. Once an aspiring leader

gains insight into effective leadership skills, he or she faces the challenge of adopting those qualities and making them his or her own.

In the business world, leadership skill must be visibly demonstrated before one is given the opportunity to lead. Each circumstance regarding the path to leadership is different, but there are certain characteristics that indicate a proclivity for leadership that can be displayed in the workplace.

The following are the eight work habits and thought processes CEOs look for when considering others for advancement within a company:

- Become indispensable.

Be so productive and responsible that all who know you know your talents and feel that without you the organization would suffer a great loss.

- Go the extra mile.

Come to work early, leave late, and never let your boss outwork you. Do not attempt to do less work; seek to do more. Continually seek to improve your personal business production.

- Be positive and uplifting.

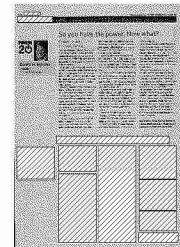
Never complain or speak negatively of others. Always carry a smile, and make sure that when others see you in the office they are glad to see you and are not hiding behind the water cooler until you pass.

- Make others more productive.

A valued person in the workplace is one that is able to both inspire and enhance the creativity, dedication and work production of others. When a CEO is looking for a manager, this is the type of person they want.

- Be responsible.

When given a responsibility, be reminded that this is leadership in training. Practice responsibility at every opportunity.



- Become knowledgeable of business.

Continually increase your personal knowledge base. Acquire as much specific industry knowledge and general business knowledge as possible.

- Come up with solutions.

Problems are easy to find. Show me a man who can find solutions. Creative, flexible thought is the province of great leadership. Be the person who comes up with reasonable, researched options.

- Learn to think like the CEO.

Look at the organization through his or her eyes. Think — how would you drive success if you were at the helm? Create a plan of action. As Winston Churchill once said: The empires of the future are empires of the mind.

KENNETH R. BANKS, president of Banks Contracting Co. in Baltimore, can be reached at kenbanks@bankscontracting.com.