

The 21st century presented new challenges: change and technological development are constant. Retirement trends and mobility diversify work environments more than ever. Competition and globalization impact talent retention and performance.

These and other factors call for “21st Century Leadership”. As you are reading this, think about how you would adopt the following characteristics.



21st Century Leaders ADD VALUE

In the modern era, people follow leaders who add value to the work that they do. They like to be inspired, rather than micro-managed, even though micro-managing is sometimes necessary.

Leaders can inspire by continuously sharing a vision and explaining how the work that team members do contributes to the bigger picture and to the success of the organization.

Leaders who authentically care about people, facilitate an environment where personal and professional growth are encouraged. And when challenges arise, they seek to understand, guide, and support their team members to overcome them.

This approach adds value to team members’ work life, and deepens the connection leaders have with them.



21st Century Leaders are TRANSPARENT

Trust is the foundation of any strong relationship. One of the most effective ways to earn trust is by being transparent.

When leaders share struggles, and even failures, and how they overcame them, they show vulnerability which exhibits strength and character. Another way of being transparent is by communicating expectations and providing constructive feedback on an ongoing basis.

These actions show authenticity and that leaders are human, just like the people they lead. That authenticity establishes and strengthens trust.



21st Century Leaders are HUMBLE

In today’s complex world, it takes a team effort to meet objectives. And leaders rely on their teams for their own success. Remaining humble shows that a leader is willing to put the team first.

[Research studies](#)¹ show that: “Humble leaders have less employee turnover, higher employee satisfaction, and they improve the company’s overall performance.”

By creating a sustainable value for associates, leaders perpetuate the value for customers, which positively impacts shareholders.

Quotes for Success

“Don’t be afraid to show your vulnerability. Be transparent with your team, even when the truth may be unpopular or inconvenient.”

-Bill George

“In order for connection to happen, we have to allow ourselves to be seen.”

“Courage starts with showing up and letting ourselves be seen.”

-Brene Brown

“We should seek the greatest value of our actions.”

-Stephen Hawkins

Tools-in-a-Box

Articles

- [Are you a 21st Century Leader?](#)
- [Five Signs You’re Working for a Truly Great Manager](#)
- [Leaders are More Powerful When They are Humble, New Research Shows](#)

Videos

- [Leadership Without Ego: Bob Davids](#)
- [How to build \(and rebuild\) trust | Frances Frei](#)

¹ Ashley Merryman, Washington Post—Leaders are more powerful when they’re humble, new research shows.