

10 Unconventional Habits of World-Class Leaders

Break the mold. Lead with impact.

By Lowe to Lead

1. They Ask "Stupid" Questions

Instead of proving how much they know, great leaders ask what others are afraid to.

Psych Insight: This lowers psychological safety barriers and invites innovation.

Try it: Ask a question this week that risks embarrassment—but could unlock clarity.

2. They Say "No" Like a Samurai

True leaders protect their time and energy like warriors.

From the Code of the Samurai: “One must act with decisiveness, not distraction.”

Try it: Block 1 hour this week to say “no” to busywork and “yes” to deep work.

3. They Lead from the Middle, Not the Top

World-class leaders walk among their team, not above them.

Inspired by nature: Dolphins lead pods by swimming with, not ahead of, the group.

Try it: Spend 10 minutes today asking your team what they think the solution is.

4. They Obsess Over Boring Things

Habits, systems, and consistency win over brilliance and charisma.

Psych Insight: The brain craves novelty, but growth lives in repetition.

Try it: Pick one leadership routine and master it daily for 30 days.

5. They Steal Like Artists

They borrow ideas from psychology, jazz, nature, war strategy, and kids’ cartoons.

Steve Jobs: “Creativity is just connecting things.”

Try it: Read/watch something unrelated to your field, and apply it.

6. They Talk Last in the Room

They don't dominate conversations, they design them.

Harvard study: Leaders who listen first increase team trust and innovation.

Try it: Hold back your opinion at your next meeting until everyone else shares.

7. They Reflect Like Monks

World-class leaders think as much as they do.

The Rule of St. Benedict: *"Listen with the ear of your heart."*

Try it: Journal for 5 minutes after your next challenge—what did it teach you?

8. They Train Like Athletes

Leadership is a muscle, not a title.

Inspired by elite units: U.S. Navy SEALs do drills daily—even at the top.

Try it: Schedule weekly “reps” of feedback, delegation, or vision-casting.

9. They Follow Unlikely Mentors

They learn from janitors, Uber drivers, poets, and children.

Psych Insight: Perspective-shifting grows empathy and wisdom.

Try it: Ask someone outside your world, “What would you do in my shoes?”

10. They Embrace the Inner Wilderness

Silence, solitude, and nature fuel their leadership.

From Moses to Mandela: Great leaders withdrew before rising.

Try it: Spend 15 minutes alone in nature this week. No phone. Just listen.

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