



Ethical Leadership

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We've probably all experienced 'good' leadership – from leaders who inspire, motivate and encourage others; as well as 'bad' leadership – when leaders try to bully, manipulate and control to achieve their ends. And these experiences often influence how we strive to practice leadership ourselves – modelling ourselves on the good leadership we have experienced, and usually being fairly determined to avoid replicating the bad!

But take good leadership a step further and think about 'ethical' leadership.

Ethical leadership is about knowing what the 'right' thing to do is, and always basing our leadership decisions and actions on 'doing the right thing'.

Ethical leaders are leaders that put the good of the organisation and the pursuit of its purposes, values, vision and mission at the core of all decisions made and actions taken in relation to the organisation – putting the organisation's interests ahead of the interests of any individuals.

Ethical leaders earn the trust of others through their actions, and they role model integrity, accountability and responsibility – even when things go wrong. They admit their mistakes and they learn from them.

Establishing a Code of Conduct or Code of Ethics (plenty of examples on the internet) for your organisation is a good first step to creating an ethical culture within the organisation. This document should clearly state what is acceptable (ethical) behaviour and what is not. The Code of Conduct/Ethics needs to be familiar to all those involved with the organisation so they know what is expected.

And most importantly, ethical leaders role model ethical behaviour through their actions, words and expectations of others.