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**18 Tips To Be a More Successful Young Leader**

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The entirety of this post are personal insights that I have had as a young leader in the form of tips. This is for anyone aspiring to become a young leader or just a more effective one. I have also included pointers from close friends who are leaders in their area.

1. **Be confident, but be careful to not confuse confidence with arrogance.** To do this, you need to fully know what you are talking about. When you do speak, speak with conviction.

2. "**Leadership is about vision.** It's about giving new or original perspectives to things. One who has his own understanding and interpretation of things will distinguish himself from others. Thinking for yourself implies not taking anything for a fact. Always look for a personal explanation or interpretation. In order to gain that personal distance and understanding, one should never rely on others knowledge, work or judgment." Felix Winckler, COO and cofounder of Poutsch.

3. **"Inspire others to take action by showing your own action, commitment and good work for a better world. Make it easy for people to step in and join forces if they want to help."** Ralien Bekkers, Dutch UN Youth Representative on Sustainable Development.

4. **"Be ambitious and do not be afraid to take risks."** Jared Costanzo, president and founder of the Student Voice Project. Do not be afraid to be idealistic. If you happen to fail, you will recognize your strengths and limitations and be better to adapt in the future. Only by knowing your limit can you fully maximize your potential. Of course, the scope of your limit will lessen over time through experience.

5. **Never let someone tell you that you cannot do something.** If something isn't out there, go create it.

6. **Be organized.** In order to work effectively, you will need to be organized. If you are disorganized, you will tend to forget certain things.

7. **Be able to articulate your thoughts and speech thoroughly and efficiently (a.k.a. communication skills).** This also includes being able to delegate tasks and being clear of your expectations.

8. **Be able to establish your goals and commit to your plan.** "Sometimes structure, deadlines, and plans aren't the best way to lead. At times, it is more effective to go with the flow, take it as it comes and explore each new opportunity. But, despite this, you always need to keep in mind your end game, your objective." Prasanth Ramakrishna, President and Founder of Unheard Voices. Kevin Phan, a Commitment Mentor at the Clinton Global Initiative, also advises young people to, "Be patient with your goals. Go on your own timeline."

9. **"Make sure your project, campaign or endeavor solves a problem and you that have clearly defined what the problem is and how you are going to solve it."** Alex Wirth, chair and founder of the Campaign for a Presidential Youth Council.

10. **Know the strengths and weaknesses of yourself and your team.** Being a leader does not always mean that you are the most intelligent or capable person within a group. It just means that you have an ability to organize people and are able to

utilize each person's skill set. "Leading isn't an easy task -- not everyone can do it. I believe if you are truly passionate about the area you are leading in, not only will you be a successful leader, but there is no end to what you can do. Nothing material can slow you down, only your passion will drive you." Jai Kumar Mediratta, Camp Kesem Executive Board of UNL

11. **Be fair.** To gain the trust and respect of your followers, you need to be fair. If an opportunity comes up, do not automatically look to your close friends or colleagues. Let everyone know and have the same chance to get whatever it is.

12. **Be clever.** If something does not work out, try an alternative method. If you do not have enough resources for a project, look in your community to see if it can be easily donated or lent to you. For instance, if I need to use a conference room at the University of Nebraska -- Lincoln to hold an event, it will cost around $200 for a day. However, certified student organizations of the college can reserve one room for free for a specific day. Being clever, in this case, means that you go partner with a student organization and have them reserve a room for you.

13. **Be optimistic.** After all, optimism is what is needed to change the way this world works. "What you expect tends to happen." Gary Dees, president of Leadership Messenger Academy.

14. **Remember that you are young.** Be energetic! Personally, I try not to act so serious all the time. Recognize that you are still young and embrace all that your prime has to offer for you.

15. **Connect! Strive to make a vast and diverse network of friends and colleagues.** You will never know when a person

will become handy. I have created a support system through my peers and colleagues. Everyone benefits from a big network. If you want to network with someone you do not know, just introduce yourself through a message and add them anyway.

16. **Know when to give "the talk," and do give it when it is necessary.** If a member of your team volunteers for a task or have accepted a task delegated by you, they are making a commitment to execute it. Sometimes there are valid reasons that prevent a person from completing their duties and in those cases, you have to accept it when they happen. I do not hesitate to be frank with someone if I had already made my expectations clear or if their failure to complete a task will (or have) hinder the entire team.

17. **Have a right-hand man (or woman).** This is a go-to person that you trust. My Program Director, Tanvir Faisal, is basically my other arm. I ask that all inquiries sent to me are cc'ed to him as well. He will catch whatever I miss, and at times, advise me on what should be done for all sorts of things.

18. **"Know when to listen to others, and when to listen only to yourself."** Mark & Ismini Svensson, Founders of

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1. Which of the 18 do you consider yourself do you already possess? Explain.
2. Which of the 18 that you don’t have would you most like to accomplish? Explain.
3. Which are the hardest for you? Explain.
4. What would you add to the list?