

Leaders
Strategies for Taking Charge
by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus
[Fertig notes]

- *Leadership is about character.*
Seven criteria that most organizations use to evaluate their executives: technical competence, people skills, conceptual skills, track record, taste, judgment and character. Of these the last two are the most difficult to identify, measure or develop. We certainly don't know how to teach them.
- *The capacity to generate and sustain trust is the central ingredient in leadership.*
You can have the most glorious vision in the world and it won't mean a thing if there's low trust in the organization.
- Leadership is the pivotal force behind successful organizations and that to create vital and viable organizations, leadership is necessary to help organizations develop a new vision of what they can be, then mobilize the organization to change toward the new vision.
- Credibility is at a premium these days. Leaders are being scrutinized as never before.
- Power is at once the most necessary and most distrusted element exigent to human progress.
- Power is the capacity to translate intention into reality and sustain it. Leadership is the wise use of this power. Leaders direct organizational changes that build confidence and empower their employees to seek new ways of doing things. They overcome resistance to change by creating visions of the future that evoke confidence in and mastery of new organizational practices.
- Many organizations tend to be overmanaged and underled. They may excel in the ability to handle the daily routine, yet never question whether the routine should be done at all. There is a profound difference between management and leadership, and both are important. "To manage" means "to bring about, to accomplish, to have charge of or responsibility for, to conduct." "Leading" is "influencing, guiding in direction, course, action, opinion." The distinction is crucial. *Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing.* The difference may be summarized as activities of vision and judgment - *effectiveness* – versus activities of mastering routines – *efficiency*.
- I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live. George Bernard Shaw
- Innovation – any new idea – by definition will not be accepted at first, no matter how sensational the idea may be. Innovation causes resistance to stiffen, defense to set in, opposition to form. And any new idea looks either foolish or impractical or unfeasible – at first. It takes repeated attempts, endless demonstrations, monotonous rehearsals before innovation can be accepted and internalized by any organization.
- People love others not for who they are, but for how they make us feel. In order to *willingly* accept the direction of another individual, it *must* feel good to do so. This is the very essence of leadership. Irwin Federman, former president and CEO of Monolithic Memories
- In the case of our ninety leaders, they used five key skills:
 1. The ability to accept people as they are, not as you would like them to be. Understand what other people are like on *their* terms, rather than judging them.
 2. The capacity to approach relationships and problems in terms of the present rather than the past.

3. The ability to treat those who are close to you with the same courteous attention that you extend to strangers and casual acquaintances. We tend to take for granted those to whom we are closest.
 4. The ability to trust others, even if the risk seems great.
 5. The ability to do without constant approval and recognition from others.
- Receptivity to criticism is as necessary as it is loathsome. And the more valid the criticism, the more difficult it is to receive.
 - All learning involves some “failure,” something from which one can continue to learn. Reasonable failure should never be received with anger.
 - A vision cannot be established in an organization by edict, or by the exercise of power or coercion. It is more an act of persuasion, of creating an enthusiastic and dedicated commitment to a vision because it is right for the times, right for the organization, and right for the people who are working in it.
 - When we asked our ninety leaders about the personal qualities they needed to run their organizations, they never mentioned charisma, or dressing for success, or time management or any of the other glib formulas that pass for wisdom in the popular press. Instead, they talked about persistence and self-knowledge; about willingness to take risks and accept losses; about commitment, consistency and challenge. But, above all, they talked about learning.
 - Leaders are perpetual learners.
 - Walter B. Wriston, Citicorp’s retired chairman and CEO, said, “If you haven’t ever made a mistake, you haven’t been trying hard enough.”
 - The entire industry has learned the importance of flexibility, and bankruptcy awaits those who are unable to cope with rapid change.
 - People have a stake in an idea if they participate in its creation; then they’ll work much harder, in a much more dedicated way, to bring it to success.