REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP

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KAREN DAY WHITE
EXECUTIVE COUNSEL
LOUISIANA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

RENEE GARCIA
CHAIR OF LITIGATION
PHILADELPHIA LAW DEPARTMENT

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WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

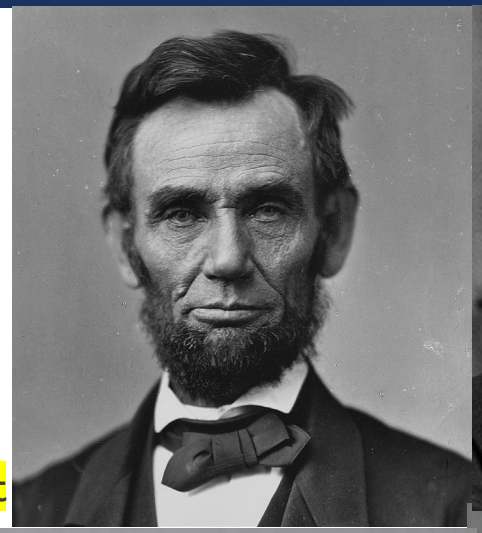
lead ·er ·ship

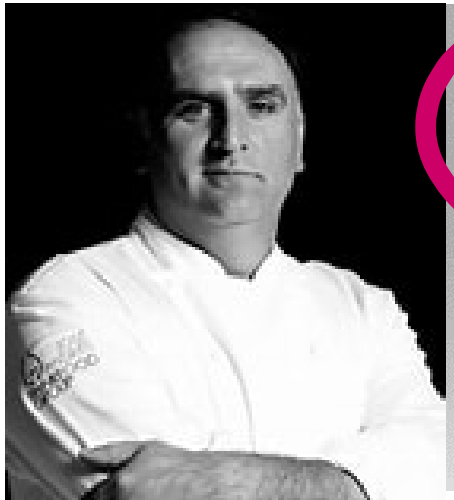
NOUN

the action of leading a group of people or an organization

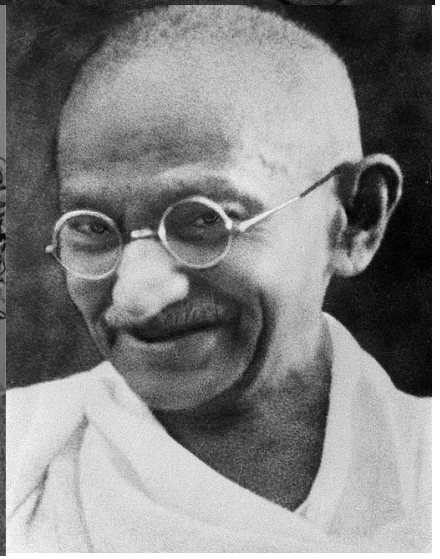
SYNONYMS

guidance · direction · authority · control · management · superintendence · supervision · organization · government · orchestration · initiative · influence







LEADERS ← → MANAGERS

LEADERSHIP:

A way of thinking and behaving

- Set Vision, Goals, Direction
- Sell it
- People-Focused
- Have Followers
- Do the Right Thing

MANAGEMENT:

A set of roles and responsibilities

- Plans the details, Completes the Tasks
- Tell It
- Work-Focused
- Have Subordinates
- Do Things Right

Signs that you're leading without a title:

- You brings ideas to the conversation
- Others come to you for advice
- You lift up and encourage others
- You look for ways to improve yourself and the team
- Clients want you on their team
- You are accountable for your work and decisions

LEADERSHIP AT EVERY LEVEL

"LEADERSHIP IS AN ACTION, NOT A POSITION." ~ DONALD MCGANNON

LEADERSHIP STYLES

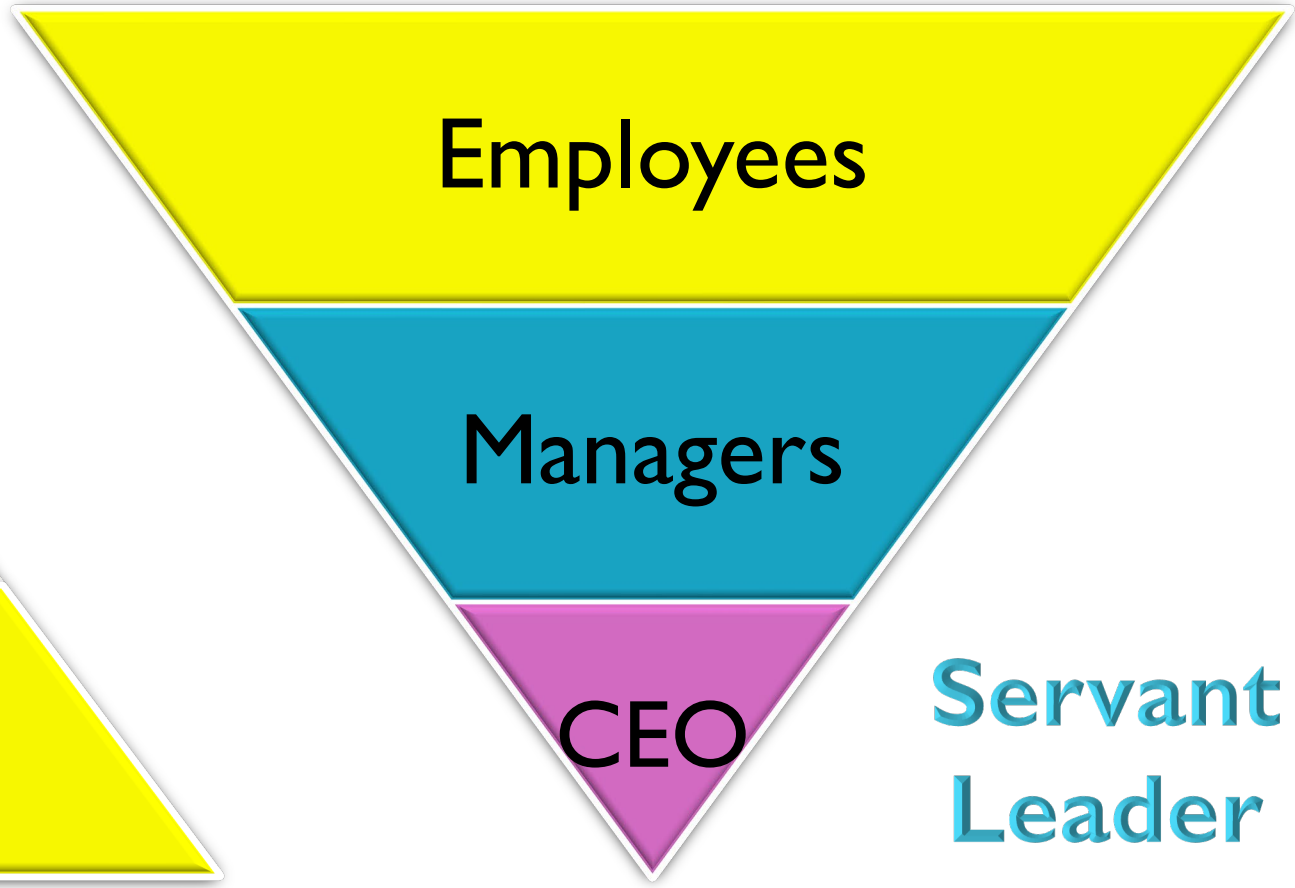
"Whatever you are, be a good one."
— Abraham Lincoln

- Transactional
- Autocratic
- Servant
- Democratic
- Laissez-Faire
- Bureaucratic
- Transformational

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

"I think leadership is service and there is power in that giving: to help people, to inspire and motivate them to reach their fullest potential." – Denise Morrison





20 TIPS FOR GREAT LEADERSHIP

- **“Leaders aren’t born, they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work. And that’s the price we’ll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal.”**

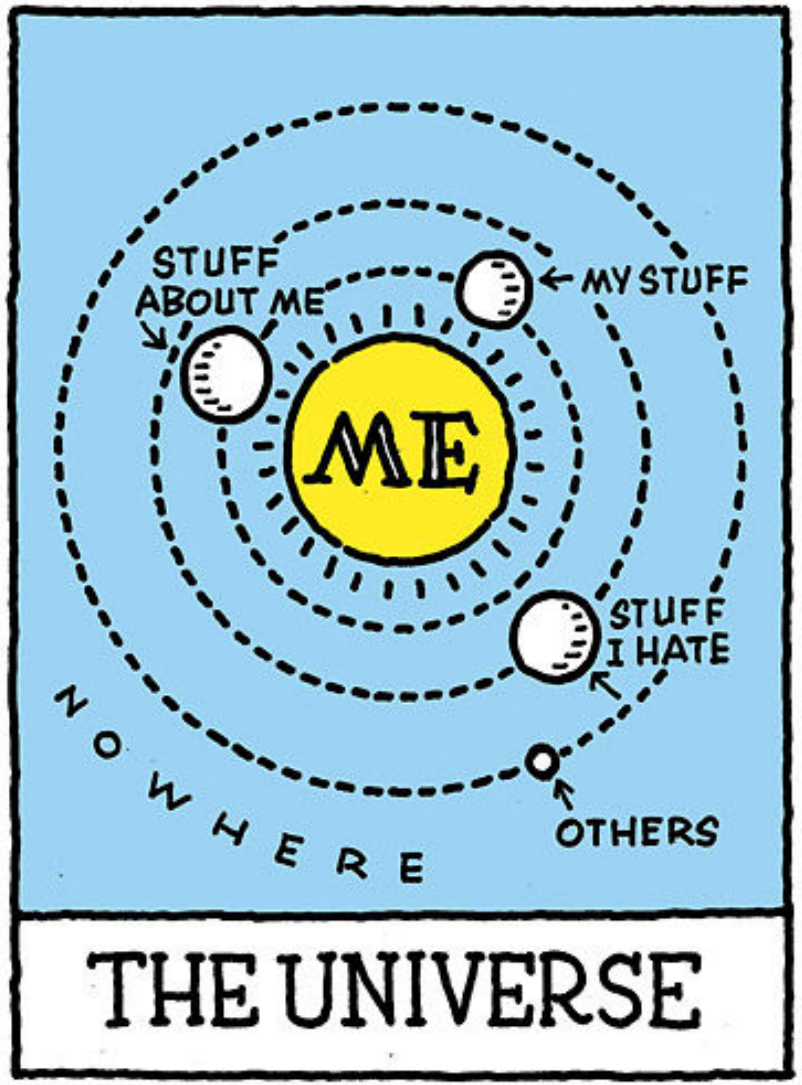
— Vince Lombardi

INTERNAL DYNAMICS

- "In order to change the world, you have to get your head together first."
  - Jimi Hendrix

- "Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself."
  - Leo Tolstoy

#1 – GET OVER YOURSELF



- You are wonderful, you are an individual, you are unique
- But there are over 7.75 BILLION people on the planet
- **If you want to be *interesting*, then be *interested***
  - ✓ in the wellbeing of others
  - ✓ in things beyond your microcosm
  - ✓ in the things that *really* matter at the end of the day

#2 – LIGHTEN UP

- **"A sense of humor is part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, of getting things done."**

  — Dwight D. Eisenhower
- Stand-up comedy is likely not your strong suit, so quit cracking jokes
- Instead, look for humor in the unexpected, in the little things, and strive for originality
- Let your laughter flow naturally and encourage others to do the same

#3 – RADIATE A SENSE OF A CALM

- **"Keep cool; anger is not an argument."**
  - Daniel Webster, former U.S. Secretary of State
- Recognize what pushes your buttons and develop coping skills to deal with them
- Nip hysteria in the bud when possible; ***defensiveness breeds defensiveness***
- When tensions, fear, and anger are high, don't escalate it – deescalate as soon and as much as possible
- Avoid handling a situation while it's still "hot" – marinate on it and formulate a rational, calm response



- Temper your tone – be aware of your word choices, volume, and body language
- Keep it in perspective

#4 – STOP TRYING TO CHANGE OTHERS

- Insisting on trying to forge someone in your image is the height of egotism
- **It's not your job to change anyone nor to "fix" the way that they think or work**
- Even if you try, you likely won't be successful
- Focus on controlling what you can:
  how you react to, or interact with, your co-workers
- Mentorship is a two-way relationship, a voluntary, joint effort
- Diversity is what makes us stronger, better, and resilient



#5 – BECOME A DIPLOMAT

- When there is conflict – between employees or involving you – there are strategies to successfully resolve conflicts like a pro:
  (1) set limits to control the exchanges, and stick to them
  (2) don't tolerate harassment – period
  (3) avoid subjects that you know will trigger disagreement
  (4) use inclusive words – "we," "us," "our team," "our work family"
  (5) recognize that there are multiple perceptions of the same reality
  (6) seek alternatives to the "this or that" of the conflict
  (7) exclude anger, sarcasm, contempt, and criticism

#6 – PICK YOUR BATTLES WISELY



- Not every issue demands an argument
- There are some arguments that you cannot win
- There are some that aren't worth fighting, even if you can
- <u>Ask yourself:</u>

✓ What is to be gained if I "win" and if I "lose?"

✓ What would happen if I just walked away from the dispute?

✓ Will I care about this a week, a month, a year from now?

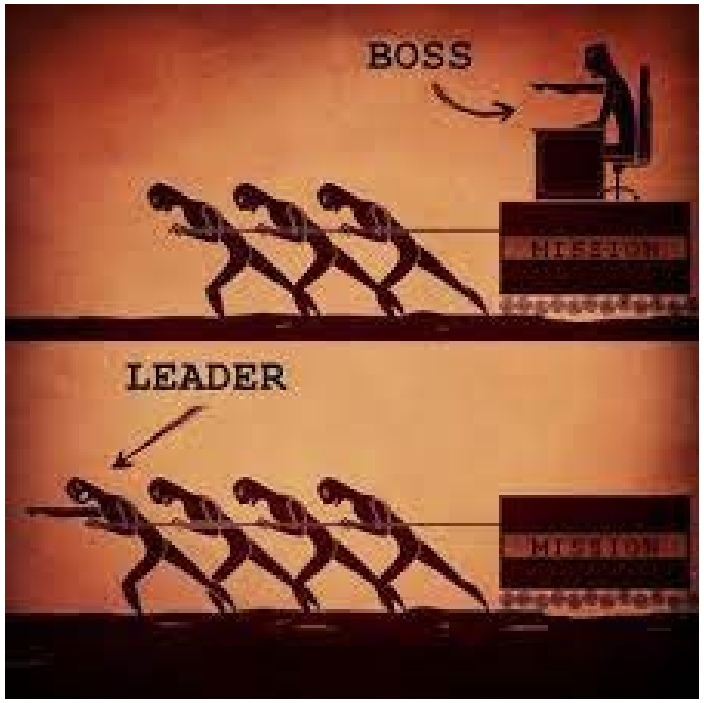
✓ Is this integral to moving forward productively at work?

#7 – BE HONEST

- **"Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom."**
  - Thomas Jefferson
- Don't expect loyalty if you can't provide honesty
- If you want to be trusted, be truthful
- Keeping up with deception is time-consuming and exhausting
- If you tell the truth, there is nothing to memorize or commit to memory



#8 – Give the Gift of Loyalty



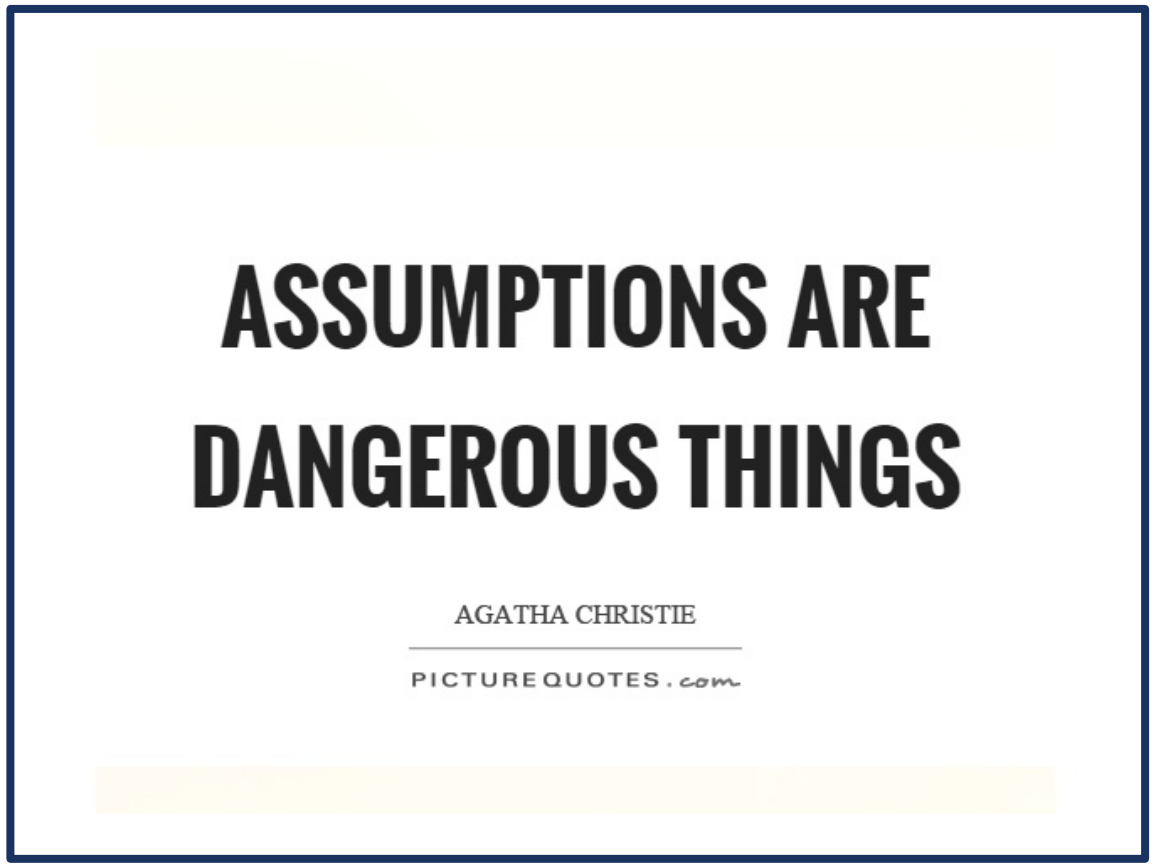
- Loyalty is absolute – you either are or you aren't
- Loyalty is returned – it flows in both directions
- Loyalty is the fastest way to team build
- Outstanding leaders will:
  - Practice discretion when it comes to the lives of co-workers
  - Keep the confidence of co-workers
  - Keep their word
  - Be there for their co-workers when needed
  - Give honest feedback if asked
  - Stand up for their co-workers when an injustice occurs

#9 – PRACTICE GRATITUDE

- Sometimes, we devote attention only when something goes wrong – the absence of a negative is not the same as appreciation and gratitude
- There are multiple opportunities in a day to express appreciation, sometimes in the actions that others overlook
- Recognize the good things that others do and thank them for doing them
- The feeling of being deeply appreciated goes a long way
- A grateful heart is a magnet for positivity – it's contagious



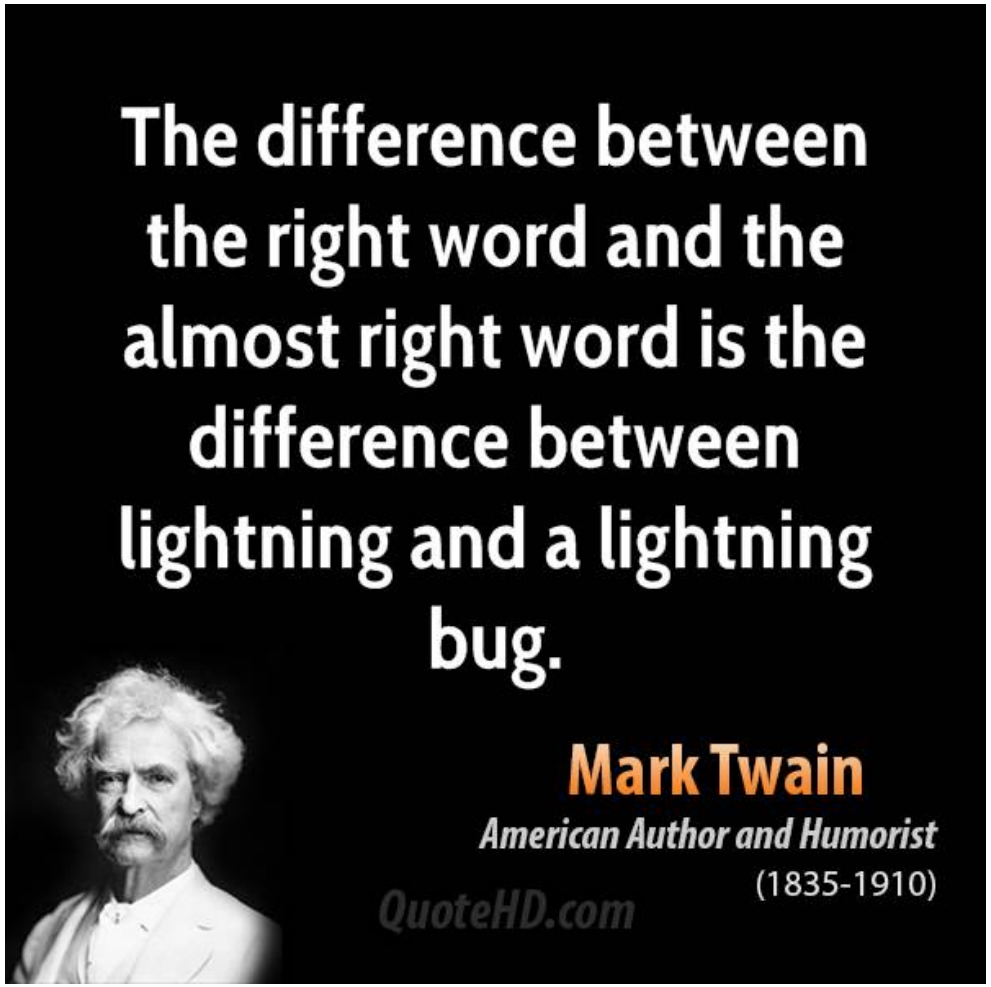
#10 – ASSUME SPARINGLY



- It's important to know what you don't know – if you think about it, that's an awful lot
- When making decisions or mapping strategies, you may come to a juncture where you don't know something
- Avoid filling in the blanks with your own assumptions or those of others
- At best, it's a bad practice; at worst, it can be devastating

#11 – REMEMBER THAT DETAILS MATTER

- Don't be satisfied with "close enough"
- Planning and organization are key to capturing all of the important little details of your daily personal and work lives
- Sometimes, that detail can mean all the difference in the world
- There is NO excuse for sending official correspondence that includes misspellings and grammatical errors – proofread your work
- Recognize that your co-workers often have also dedicated time to taking care of the details that make work life better for everyone



INTERACTION WITH OTHERS

- "The way you treat people says a lot about who you are. Be careful. Your actions are screaming over your words."
  - Thema Davis

- "How they treat you defines them. How you treat others defines you."
  - Rita Zahara

- "Never lose sight of the fact that the most important yardstick of your success will be how you treat other people . . ."
  - Barbara Bush

#12 – LISTEN (LIKE, *REALLY* LISTEN)

- Hearing is NOT the same thing as listening
- Body language matters:
  - Orient your posture toward the person speaking
  - Make eye contact
  - Exercise stillness – don't fidget
  - Give cues to let them know that you really hear and understand



- Don't interrupt, and don't let anyone else interrupt (silence and put away your phone!)
- Even though you THINK you know where the comments are going, don't try and finish the speaker's sentences
- Taking time away from listening to someone to think of what you're going to say next is the same as if you plugged your ears
- Let there by silence when appropriate; it's okay to take a tick to really digest what's been said and respond in a meaningful way

#13 – PROJECT SELF-CONFIDENCE

- Here are three tools to build, maintain, and demonstrate your composure:
  (1) A positive attitude
  (2) Being well-prepared
  (3) Reassuring others



#14 – EXERCISE CONSISTENCY



- Your reliability demonstrates a quiet strength, one that engenders trust and confidence in others
- Be intentional about making routines and routine ways of dealing with issues
- Anticipate the unexpected and mentally prepare yourself to deal with it in a manner consistent with your intentional practice
- Don't let just anything turn your world upside down – make sure that if something is disrupting your world, that it's really worth turning over the apple cart

#15 – FOCUS ON THE SITUATION, NOT THE PERSON



- You can't always set aside the reality of who is butting heads, but . . .
- Especially when notoriously difficult people are involved, it is often prudent to set aside the personalities involved and just focus on the facts and other objective factors
  - This is where your policies and procedures are particularly handy
  - They provide clarity that is personality-neutral
  - When X, Y, and Z happen, here is the solution/remedy/consequence
- **Bonus:** the effect is consistent treatment that is almost impossible to argue with; handle the difficult situation, the difficult person follows
- Perennial troublemakers often just need to be heard – making it about the situation discourages them from creating drama to provide a stage, and instead encourages them to explore more appropriate approaches

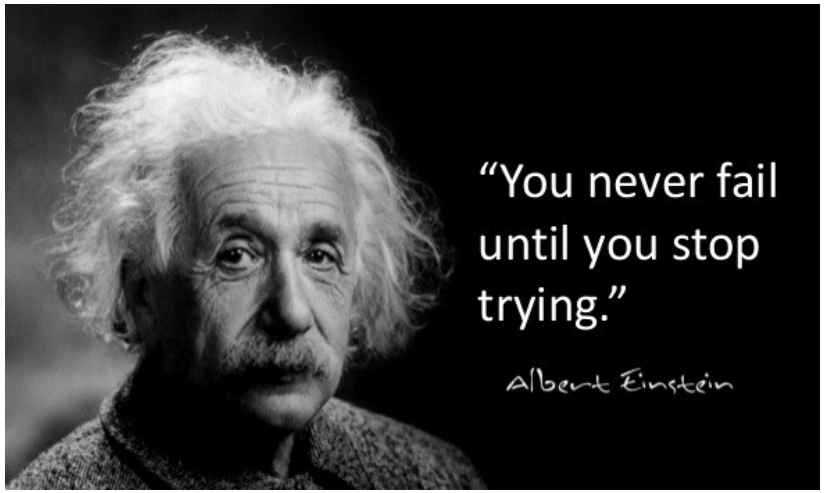
#16 – REMEMBER: NOBODY'S PERFECT



- No matter how dedicated or talented, EVERYONE makes mistakes
- **If you can't forgive others, don't expect them to forgive you**
- Triage sensibly: take any necessary immediate action and worry about reflection and the play-by-play later
- Let the person who has erred be a part of the solution or clean up of any fallout
- Put yourself in the shoes of the person who has made the error and be empathetic; let your policy guide a calm decision
- Accept a sincere apology
- Put safeguards in place or implement policies to prevent a repeat, and then ***cut it loose***

#17 – OWN YOUR MISSTEPS

- If you make a mistake, own it – don't blame others or list off excuses
- Reconstruct what happened and understand how to learn from it
- Apologize sincerely
- Find a way to make it right, now and later
- Ask for help if you need to
- Forgive yourself
- Don't let your mistake paralyze you from potentially failing again



"A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new."

- Albert Einstein

#18 – KNOW WHEN TO DIAL IT BACK

- Enthusiasm and charisma are great – until they're not
- Pick up on social, verbal, and non-verbal cues that enough is enough
- Being relentlessly exuberant is exhausting for others
- **Never tell someone to smile or cheer up**

  You have NO idea what they are dealing with, and your comment will likely have the opposite effect



#19 – BURN THE GRAPEVINE

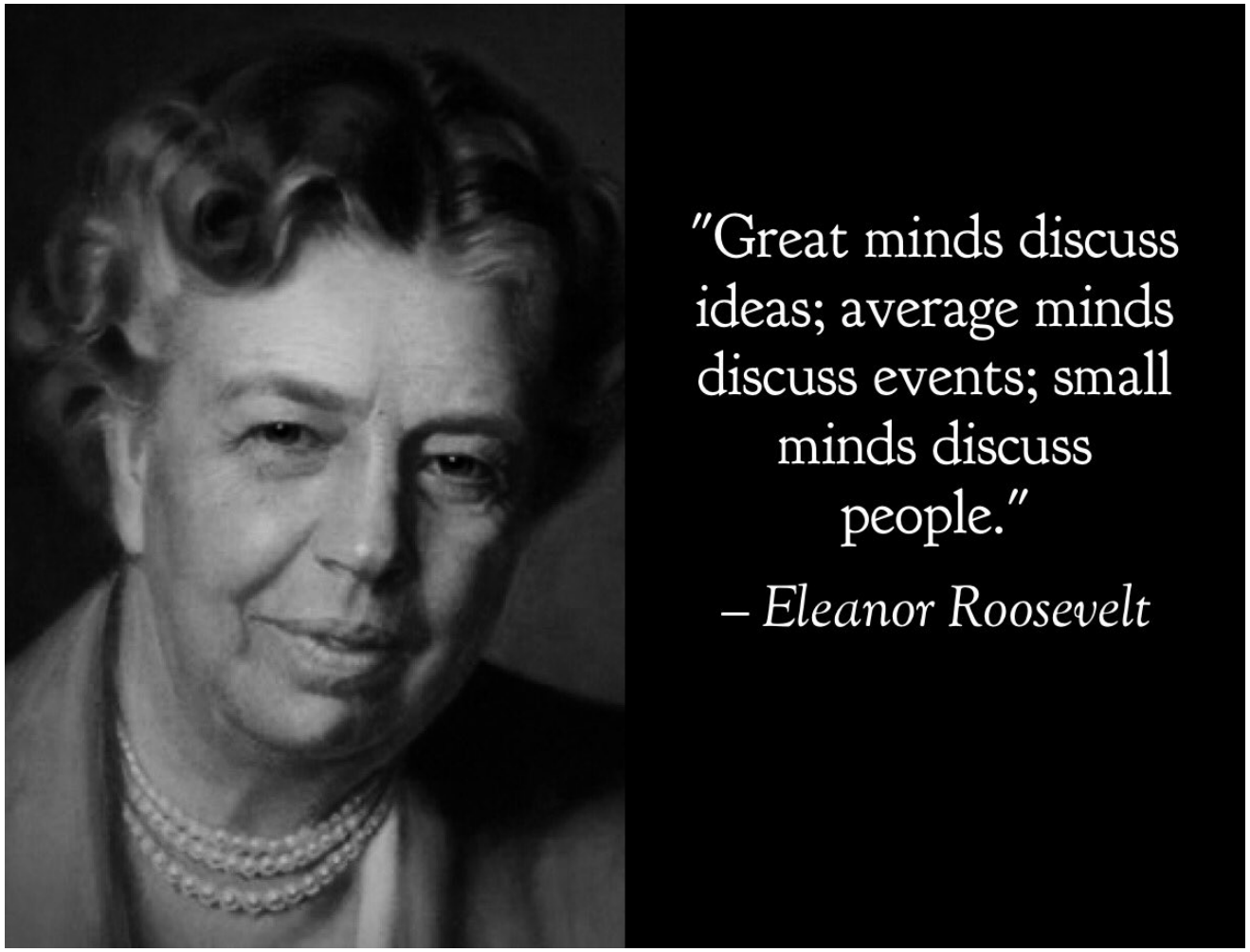
- **<u>GOSSIP IS TOXIC</u>**

- Don't say anything behind someone's back that you wouldn't say to their face

- Those who gossip *with* you will gossip *about* you, and silently wonder if you are doing the same to them

- Not to mention, it's rarely accurate

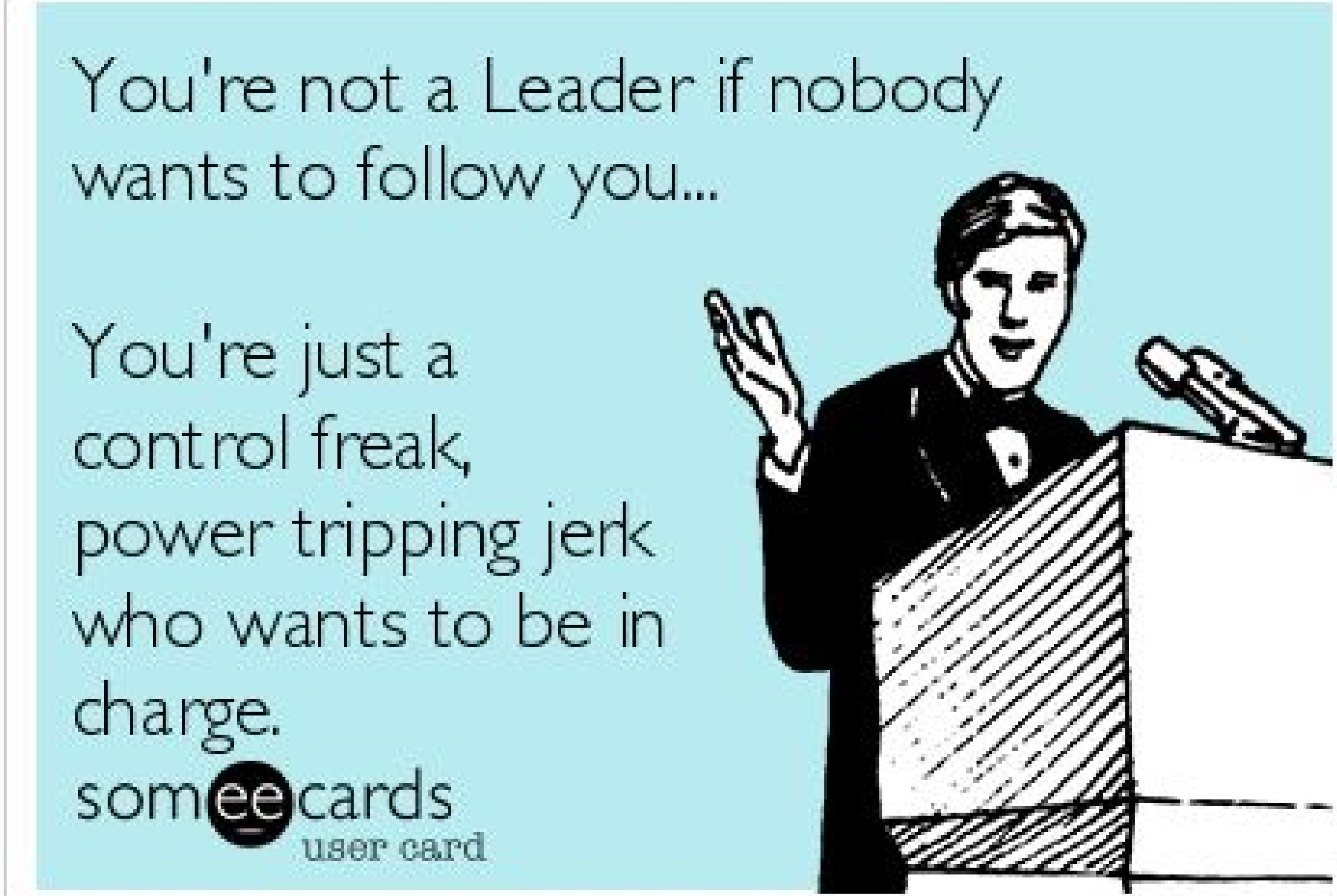
- **Instead of talking *about* each other, let's try talking *to* each other**



#20 – MIND YOUR VIRTUAL MANNERS



- Technology has created a whole new facet of our lives in which etiquette is important
- PLEASE go easy on the "Reply All" button - imagine running office to office spreading the message
- Respond to emails and text messages in a timely, polite manner
- Avoid firing off a reply if the stakes are high or there's tension – when possible, try to write it, proofread it, reread it, get away from it, then reread it again before you hit send
- Email and texting don't sufficiently convey sarcasm, body language, and the vocal nuances that are necessary to truly understand what someone is trying to say – better to be clear and choose the right words
- Silence/turn down your devices and be discreet with personal calls
- Prioritize the person in front of you – if you can't be bothered to look up from your screen, you may miss something important while you're insulting the human standing next to you


You're not a Leader if nobody wants to follow you...
You're just a control freak, power tripping jerk who wants to be in charge.
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RESOURCES

Books

- The Servant Leader: How to Build a Creative Team, Develop Great Morale, and Improve Bottom-Line Performance, By James A. Autry, 2007
- Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts. By Brene Brown, 2018
- What Got You Here Won't Get You There: How Successful People Become Even More Successful, By Marshall Goldsmith, 2007
- Managing Up: How to Move up, Win at Work, and Succeed with Any Type of Boss, By Mary Abbajay, 2018

Podcasts

- Speaking to Influence on Apple Podcasts with Dr. Laura Sicola
- Cubicle Confidential on Apple Podcasts with Mary Abbajay & Chris DeSantis
- Coaching Real Leaders with Muriel Wilkins

Websites

- Harvard Business Review - Ideas and Advice for Leaders (hbr.org)
- Adam Grant – Books, Podcast, TED Talks, Newsletter, Articles (adamgrant.net)

THANK YOU!

Karen White
Executive Counsel
Louisiana Municipal Association
6767 Perkins Road
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808
phone: 225-332-7670
email: kwhite@lma.org
www.lma.org
Pronouns: she/her

Renee Garcia
Chair, Litigation
City of Philadelphia Law Department
1515 Arch Street, 17th floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102
phone: 215-683-5038
email: renee.garcia@phila.gov
www.phila.gov/law
Pronouns: she/her