

BEING AN UMPIRE . . . BEING A LEADER

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Leaders in the college baseball umpire community . . .

Who are they? How did they attain that leadership moniker? What does it take to be a leader? Is it simply that an umpire is overwhelmingly talented? Is the umpire just politically savvy or well connected? Does that umpire have one of those charismatic personalities?

These are just a few of the many interesting questions surrounding leadership in the world of college baseball umpiring. So, what is needed to be a respected leader?

It was at this point in drafting this article that I realized everything I had written in the next page or two was my attempt to answer this leadership question for you. The supposed words of wisdom I was sharing related to each individual's ability to think, practice, learn and evolve as a leader. It was at that point I stopped, deleted everything I had written and decided that I may not necessarily be the best person to help you become a leader.

Rather than preach at you, or suggest a list of attributes or skills you must develop to become a leader, I think it better to allow you to figure those out for yourself. To aid you in starting that process, however, I thought I would share some thoughts from respected leaders across several professions. I encourage you to think through each of these leadership quotes, relate them to collegiate officiating and begin to develop your own unique leadership style and skill set.

*A good leader is a person who takes a little more than his share of the blame and a little less than his share of the credit. *John Maxwell*

*Success at the highest level may come down to one question . . . Can you make the choice that your happiness might come from someone else's success? *Jeff Haden*

*A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd. *Max Lucado*

*When eagles are silent, parrots begin to chatter. *Winston Churchill*

*To handle yourself, use your head; to handle others, use your heart. *Eleanor Roosevelt*

*The mediocre leader tells. The good leader explains. The better leader demonstrates. The best leader inspires. *William Arthur Ward*

*The day matriculating umpires stop bringing you their problems is the day you stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence in your ability to help them or concluded that you don't care. Either case is a failure of leadership. *(paraphrasing) Colin Powell*

*A leader can be like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go out ahead, whereupon others follow, not realizing that all along they are being directed from behind. *Nelson Mandela*

*Being a good manager means doing things right; being a leader means doing the right things. *Peter Drucker*

*I cannot give you the formula for success, but I can give you a formula for failure—try to please everybody. *Herbert Bayard Swope*

*The challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; kind, but not weak; bold, but not a bully; humble, but not timid; proud, but not arrogant; and to have a sense of humor without being silly, sarcastic or condescending. *Jim Rohn*

*The secret to being a great leader is to be a great communicator; the secret to being a great communicator is to be a great listener. *Richard Fetchiet*

*The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands during times of challenge or controversy. *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

*Average leaders raise the bar on themselves; good leaders raise the bar for others; great leaders inspire others to raise their own bar. *Orrin Woodward*

*Don't blow out another's candle, for it won't make yours shine brighter. *Jaachynma N.E Agu*

Occasionally, when I'm drafting an article, I'll ask my daughter, a communications professional, to offer any suggestions or edits. Not surprisingly, she seems to enjoy pointing out a typo or grammatical error and is certainly timely in returning her edits.

With this particular article, however, she went a little further and posed a question to me . . . "Dad, as someone who is supposed to be a leader in the umpire community, don't you find it a little ironic that your entire article is based on the thoughts and quotes of others?"

Touche' Maddie . . . I will tell you what I told her. I think there are many people from many walks of life (including many of you reading this) that have much more to offer than I do on leadership and across the spectrum of life's lessons. Hence, my decision to share some of my favorite quotes with you—some pre-season food for thought as you prepare to up your game in 2018.

Peace.