

CEBA
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Dr. Lloyd S. Lewan

Thank you for that generous introduction.

First, my thanks to the many sponsors who assure this important event.

And second, I do not want to distract in any way from our purpose in being here – honoring men and women who represent the best in ethical business.

I do, however, appreciate this opportunity for a few thoughts.

I am an old man, 70 this year, and I do not give advice any more; but I will offer what I have learned over my years in the world and the world of work.

We live in a time of great division – nation against nation, religion against religion, complicated competition with the businesses of other nations, the divisions created by a growing underclass world wide, and the many other moral, scientific, and financial dilemmas we face daily.

I remember the words of our 16th President, Abraham Lincoln: “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” We must reconcile these challenges with wiser common denominators and new understandings.

All of this will take leadership, beyond management, by men and women steeped in ethics and the commitment to serve.

I was privileged a few semesters ago to teach Ethical Leadership at the University of Colorado in Boulder, and I urged these young and bright men and women to consider great leadership as the best guarantee of ethical behavior.

Hence, today, I submit we are honoring great leaders who, by definition, must also possess an underlining ethic, for leadership **is** about your character and your presence in others' lives.

I believe leadership is the DNA of any nation, business, organization, or home.

A few comments about leadership; and throughout my words today if you do not hear and feel ethics, then I have failed miserably.

1. Leadership is guided by principles, as all great things are. While serving in the military, I remember two principles:

Eat last so that those you serve are given first. Even today I wait until all have been served before taking communion at my church.

Another, familiarity breeds contempt. Friendly is okay, but not familiar. Wouldn't we avoid many workplace and ethical issues if we all followed this principle?

2. Leadership is a one-way street. You give and give and give without expectation of return. It is a commitment one makes because it is right and needed.
3. Leadership is not a business for victims for at the heart of leadership is always an appreciative spirit, something not found in textbooks.

I gave a keynote some time ago entitled "Is Your Toilet Paper Soft." Yes, I woke up this morning and my toilet paper was soft. My breakfast was yummy and abundant; my shower water was warm and clean. I will sleep safely this evening. I have enjoyed wonderful colleagues and the company they created. I can say and believe as I wish, for I live in a free country. I have sailed the world with thousands of faculty, staff, students, and crew. I recently survived an abdominal

aorta aneurysm, and today I am here with you. I am so grateful and have such an appreciative spirit.

Leaders must have this spirit.

4. Leadership is antithetical to human nature. You will have to fight all your human instincts to be a great leader.

And

5. Leadership is not always about you or about your talent. It is more about your ability to free the talents of others, to let them pass you by, if you will, just as we all wish that those most precious to us, our children, will pass us by.

Let me now define leadership as I have experienced it.

Note, I did not say management. No one respects the functions of management – planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling – more than businessmen and women. But, there is more.

I remember years ago when our ship went aground coming into Alexandria, Egypt. It was a difficult moment. The U.S. ambassador and high-level members of the Egyptian Navy were assisting as we took on considerable water through the split steel bottom plates.

While on the bridge with the Chinese captain and chief engineer, who were attempting to ensure safety by arguing whether to shut off the steam boilers, I thought to myself: What good would Ken Blanchard's *The One Minute Manager* do now – one minute goal setting, one minute praising, one minute reprimand.

Leadership is not about style, techniques, and labels.

Of course, leadership is always about accomplishing the mission of an organization, getting the job done; and this requires management and leadership, which are very different in my view.

What then is leadership?

Leadership is first being the number one believer.

You must be the number one believer if you want me to follow you anywhere.

Some time ago, I had dinner with a judge. He complained about our judicial system all through dinner – plea-bargaining, sentencing, etc. After he paid for dinner, I suggested he resign from office. He doesn't believe anymore in the best system anywhere with all its faults. I do not want to go before him and have my indiscretions judged, for I believe his judgment might be skewed.

I want a teacher who believes in her discipline even if it pushes me.

I want to go to a house of worship where the individual up front is the number one believer.

I want to marry one who believes in marriage and will do the work of marriage.

My brother Paul was the number one believer in the office technology business and loved serving customers. That's why he was CEO, and I was relegated to chairman of the board.

Martin Luther King didn't come before that crowd in Washington D.C. and say, "I have 26 objectives in behavioral terms I'd like to present and promulgate in a memo to you for consideration."

He said, "Deep in my heart, I do believe."

I'll bet that our award recipients today are believers in what they do; and I know many in this room and in our communities, not here today, who have experienced major successes because they believed enough.

Focus is the next responsibility of a leader – focusing others on that which is really important.

On one of my voyages of Semester at Sea, students were concerned about many nagging issues – pits in the cherry pie, lumpy mattresses, inconsistent air conditioning, and much more.

I listened, took notes, and left the hall agreeing to look into it all. The student body president insisted I say something.

I returned to the student union, looked at this precious group, and said six words: “China tomorrow. China tomorrow. China tomorrow.”

We were to dock in Shanghai the next morning; and after all, why were we sailing the world but to introduce our students to those cultures that would influence their lives and the lives of their children.

As the leader, it was my responsibility and charge to keep the voyage focused on our primary goal, regardless of the side issues.

I have the privilege of working with urban at-risk, vulnerable to gang recruitment, youth with ODYGA, led by Rev. Leon Kelly, I always keep my eyes on what drew me to this work – helping to find a moral man to place in the life of every at-risk boy in order to curb violence. Women have been more than faithful. Men need to stand a little taller in this effort. I have had two special friends for over 20 years, Al and Levar.

I'd rather read about a great single mom or dad or about a new drug for breast or prostate cancer or about a new smart building to

protect us from natural and human disaster than read about the Giant's pitcher, Barry Zito, whose salary translates to \$514,285 a game or \$7,000 per pitch – nothing personal against Mr. Zito.

On Saturdays I used to walk in a cemetery to keep fit, and I read gravestones. I've never read "VP Finance, MBA," or "CEO" – only "Beloved Mother," "Devoted Dad," and my favorite "I Love My Wife."

The leader must focus those he or she serves on what is really important and critical. It is too easy to become sidetracked in our busyness.

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Hitler, Pol Pot, Saddam Hussein were strong in belief and focus, but they were clearly not leaders.

So, on to the last and most important aspect of leadership – influence.

If you wish me to give you influence over me as my leader, I must first know your motive toward me; and the only way I can ascertain your motive is by the way you treat me, for it is my only clue to your ethic.

Our time together today only allows me to mention a few items I watch for in my leaders before I am willing to give them influence. Otherwise, I just do as I'm told.

ONE: If you want to influence me, you must separate my behavior from my worth.

A cop pulled me over some time ago, sauntered over, looked at me awhile, asked for the required documents, and took 30 minutes to write the ticket, knowing I was in a hurry. He returned to my car, shoved the ticket in at me, stated my court date, and then just walked away.

I called the then chief of police, a friend of mine, and asked if I could have a jury trial. He laughed and told me to just pay. I was “mad” because the police officer mixed my behavior and worth together.

If he had said, “Mr. Lewan, you made an illegal right turn, endangering the public, and I must ticket you” and done so with dispatch and some warmth, I would have apologized, paid, and learned my lesson.

Flunk me if I fail your course, fire me if I prove incompetent, even jail me if I commit a crime; but don’t treat me or imply that I am a jerk, no good, or worse. You don’t have that right. Separate my behavior from my worth.

TWO: Speak in your own voice if you want to lead me.

So many of us pass the buck. “The VP says,” or “Sorry, corporate policy is....” Speak in your own voice; share the organizational responsibility.

I learned this lesson the hard way.

I remember going to a mess hall as a Marine Corps officer to tell the gunnery sergeant in charge that he was cooking the corn on the cob too long. General Bruno A. Hochmuth, my boss, killed in Vietnam, ordered me, as officer of the day, to do this. I was irritated. Think of it – a Marine Corps officer in charge of corn.

I said, “Gunny, the general’s on another “toot.” Cook the corn for 10 minutes, at least today, so he gets off my back.”

However, General Hochmuth was following in his jeep and just happened to be standing four feet behind me.

When I turned, he simply said, “Captain, I don’t need you.” Was he right? Of course. I didn’t have the courage to speak in my own voice, “Please, Gunny, cook the corn for 10 minutes.”

THREE: Leaders keep their eyes on the faithful. In our country it is easy to impress with one speech, one movie, one touchdown, one good paper. The leader must look through the hype, the bragging, and the superficial, and honor the faithful. That is essential if we want people to give their all regularly and trust they will be honored for it.

The greatness of a man’s or woman’s life is only measured by his or her daily ledger, a great batting average, if you will.

This past Saturday I had dinner with Randy Gradishar, the Denver Broncos once great linebacker. In addition to his talent, he was faithful. He never missed a game, was always in position, could always be counted upon, and very humble.

This past Christmas marked my 23rd year as Santa Claus at Children’s Hospital Denver. It’s a wonderful and sad experience each Christmas day, and the press and TV stations always want to do a story and expose my name. I refuse. Why? Because my former next door neighbor Emily Selig, a 90-year-old woman, was for 50 years a volunteer at Children’s Hospital and proudly wore a badge with 8,000 something on it – that’s 8,000 hours of volunteer service in neo-natal care at Children’s Hospital, Denver, touching and holding those so very sick. Now that’s faithful. The press should follow and name her, not me.

I know the press has been filled with news of Anna Nicole Smith, and that’s okay; but who will notice the 15 women who, 24 hours a day in shifts, walked an injured dolphin found on a beach back to health for release?

The least noticed depend on leaders to see and honor their faithfulness. Otherwise, they are often forced to boast and brag for recognition or are just forgotten.

FOUR: And to influence, you must teach me and guide me – give me perspective.

Followers mostly want your experience, your wisdom in the form of perspective and context so they might return and do it a little better for themselves. Now, that's leadership.

On a plane to visit the Taj Mahal in India, the student next to me said, "Thank God I don't live in India." The food, the airport, the poverty were getting to him. He was experiencing India for the first time.

I would have chastised him, but you know that would have done little.

Later, I summarized an article written in 1937, known to all anthropologists, and placed this summary on his door.

"Our solid American citizen awakens in a bed built on a pattern originated in the Near East.

"He takes off his pajamas, a garment invented in India and washes with soap invented by the ancient Gauls.

"Before going out to breakfast, he glances through a window made of glass invented in Egypt and, if it is raining, he puts on overshoes made of rubber discovered by the Central American Indians and takes an umbrella invented in Southeast Asia.

"On his way to breakfast, he stops and buys a paper, paying for it with coins, an ancient African invention. His knife is of steel, an alloy first made in South India...

“Our friend reads the news of the day printed on a material invented in China.

“And as he absorbs the accounts of foreign troubles, he will, if he is a good conservative citizen, thank a Hebrew deity in an Indo-European language that he is 100 percent American.”

I love America very much, but I know others have contributed to humanity, as well.

Employees who are unhappy all of the time might appreciate your organization more if they spent a month at another less thoughtful place, or a gang member might appreciate Denver more if he spent a week in Darfur.

Provide a broader **perspective** to help me and I will follow you, for it shows your motive – you want to help me see.

And, for the record, if anyone of you reaches department of state or the presidency, my life’s final enjoyment would be to be appointed as U.S. Ambassador to India.

And, I ask all this of you and more...

You must lead without ego, or at least with your ego in your pocket and always with grace.

I’ve been privileged to meet many business and world leaders, Mikhail Gorbachev and Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa among others. They were, without exception, gracious even though they were stretched beyond anything imaginable.

And didn’t our Super Bowl winning coach, Tony Dungee, show such grace as he accepted that special prize and honor. Gracious is always a leader’s robe.

As we close, a few final comments.

1. A leader has position power, yes; but he or she must also have personal power.

For me, personal power is first being peaceful. We have no time today to suggest how one becomes peaceful.

Some time ago, when I pulled into the parking lot to be weighed-in at Jenny Craig, who incidentally once owned my body, I accidentally cut off a man in a truck with a gun rack. He gave me a gesture I won't repeat and then followed me. I drove to the police station, a little nervous, and parked in handicapped parking; and I said to myself as he drove on by - he's not peaceful.

Pass the baton to another leader if you can't be peaceful, for you can cause irreparable harm to those you lead if you are not at peace with yourself.

Personal power also implies that a leader knows the difference between his or her working colleagues and those who make up their human survival unit – family and friends who love them unconditionally without reservation or hesitation. The two groups are significantly different, and a leader knows the difference. I learned this from women.

After all, with some of the violence of late, what is a gang but a substitute human survival unit.

2. Leaders must lead. "Ships are safe in the harbor, but that's not what ships are built for." A leader has a purpose and has made a promise. A leader must be in the game.
3. Tolerance and forgiveness are at the heart of leadership. Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa writes, "because of forgiveness there is a future."

4. Leaders have faith in the human spirit. Herman Melville wrote in *Moby Dick*:

“Men may seem detestable as joint companies and nations; knaves, fools and murderers there may be. Men may have mean and meager faces; but man, in the ideal, is so noble, such a grand creature, that over any ignominious blemish in him, all his fellows should run to throw their costliest robes.”

Human beings are worthy of your leadership.

5. And finally, leaders go higher and wiser for advice, to those for whom they hold a great respect, for they need help too; and you can go no higher than to your knees.

To those honored today, thank you for your ethical leadership. We are indeed grateful.

And for me, it has been a privilege to be here with you.

Thank you so much for your patience.