

LEADERSHIP & MENTORING AUSTRALIAN HELLENIC YOUTH

The Voice from the Pavement - Peter Adamis



Leadership is a complex matter that cannot be defined and discussed in a 15 minute period, nor can it be identified as natural but something that can be learned, by observation, mentoring, research, experience and a myriad of many other factors that make up leadership.

This author does not have all the answers, but can only provide a fraction of what leadership means to him.

Leadership is a conglomeration of many human characteristics that we believe make up a leader and that leadership attracts followers. This is not always the case and the myths surrounding leadership need to be analysed and not taken for granted. There are many forms of leadership and I for one do not hold the key to the chest of attributes that make a leader. We will find leaders in the captains of industry, in the Defence forces, Law enforcement, in our communities and even within our own family units.

Each leader however has at least four attributes that are easy to identify. The first is the belief in one self and the courage to follow your instincts. The second is the ability to attract men and women who will follow you because they believe in you. The third is to respect those who follow you. the fourth is the ability to communicate and express yourself effectively.



"Thanks, Pop, but today's kids don't want money, they want leadership."

Many of the Australian Hellenic youth who are community like minded will become leaders in their own right, whether it's in their chosen field in life, at the community level, personal level or within their peer group. Whatever the case may be all of those at one stage or another will be offered the mantle of leadership.

When they are faced with that prospect, they should prepare themselves to be ready to accept all of the responsibilities that come with it, for there will come times when hard decisions that will affect many people and their livelihoods may have to be made.

Those who do not find themselves in “*leadership*” roles should strive to become “*encouragers*” if they find that it’s not their style then at least they should try to become “*influencers*”, for all three roles carry the mantle of responsibility which you will have to pass onto the next generation. Who knows, maybe it’s a “Hellenic thing”, a characteristic that is embedded in our gene structure that makes us take on those roles.



Captains of industry are seen as bold and ruthless, Military personnel are selected and trained, Academics become leaders as a result of their knowledge and networks. Politicians became leaders as a result of networking, making alliances and deals and at the community levels, leaders are those who have the capacity and the ability to get things done for the betterment of their community.

In addition to the above four basic leadership attributes, it goes without saying that: *knowledge* , *faith* , *integrity*, *responsibility*, *credibility*, *courage*, *communication*. *encouragement*, *influence* and *compassion* also play an important part in a leadership role.



In life the youth will come across many people who demonstrate the above characteristics but fail to produce those same qualities when they are called upon to do so. Why, it will be because they lacked the will and the courage to move forward with confidence and faith in their abilities.

The youth will meet people who work in low level jobs and many will not even give them a time of day. However if the truth is to be known, it's better to acknowledge everyone, no matter who they are and be pleasant to them.

Don't be like executive who does not greet his employees because he believes its beneath him. Don't be a discourager in life for those who are in the least position to help you may have more influence than you think. The smart leader acknowledges everyone within his sphere and as a result is able to influence others by his demeanour.

A “discourager”, a negative mentor” and “dis-illusionists” are all negative characteristics that must be avoided at all costs for they contain the spores of poor leadership and brings about the downfall of an individual. Organisations will always falter when their leaders do not have the basic attributes required to lead any organisation.



This will become relevant when an organisation and/or community is faced with challenges and obstacles that may have negative outcomes that may lead to its demise or collapse.

This authors advice to the youth who will be the next leaders for the next 50 years is not to be afraid of becoming a leader when placed in that role.

Embrace it, be strong and have faith in yourself. The Australian Hellenic youth of today have the same abilities as those around them. No matter who they are and where they come from you will find that inside each and every one of the Australian Hellenic youth is a tiny flame that burns brightly, a flame that some may call "Hellenism" constantly reminding them of their origins and cultural heritage.



The Australian Hellenic youth should emulate their Australian Anglo, Celtic and Saxon brethren and contribute to the Australian society and thus creating a thread that is woven into the Australian fabric of society.

The Australian Hellenic youth can contribute to Australian society by entering all aspects of its institutions.

Whether it is at the political, academic, military and or community level is immaterial, but they must lay the foundations for the next generation Australians of Hellenic stock. Australia is not a melting pot like the American myths that are so often depicted in the USA. Australia should also follow the benchmarks laid down by Great Britain which is currently the most culturally diverse country in the world.



Great Brittan in this case has embraced all of its people no matter where their origins and taken the best to create a strong and united country.

Australians of Hellenic youth should learn to understand their Hellenic heritage origins as well as their Australian origins.

Leadership, encouragement and influence are keys that will enable the Australian Hellenic youth to succeed in an Australian environment. Never be afraid to face up to the challenges of life and face adversities with the courage of your convictions.

Be natural, be yourself and do the right thing, question the paradigms of the past, question your values, customs and culture and see whether they are of relevance in today's Australian Hellenic society. Remember that people will flock to you because they want to be a part of your life. That to the author is the essence of leadership.



Never be afraid, for fear is like a dark shadow that is hiding from the light.

John F. Kennedy in 1961 said: *"Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country"*.

This author says *"Ask not what your Australian Hellenic community can do for you – ask what you can do for your Australian Hellenic and wider community"* Give it your best shot.



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