

# PASSING ON THE BATON OF INFLUENCE & LEADERSHIP IN THE DIASPORA

The Voice from the Pavement - Peter Adamis 26 March 2013

There shall come a time in one's life where they will stop and reflect upon their own lives and wonder what I have done in my life to contribute to the longevity and well being of our Hellenic institutions. There are many within this group who has held leadership and influential positions within our Hellenic Diaspora.

Some are in the political arena, others at the community level, and then there are the captains of industry and men and women of influence. Leadership can be learned from the observation of others, it can be taught at a young age, taught at institutions and it can be learnt from life's challenges that are thrust upon us.

I remember two years ago meeting up with a young man who was at a formal function and was scoffing at some elders who appeared to him to be pontificating about one subject or another. When I asked why he was scoffing, he said that they (elders) were just talking rubbish. I responded to his remark with: Every elder, every person who holds a leadership position in the Hellenic Diaspora, for whatever reasons he does so., strengthens the well being of the organization and thus creating a foundation for its longevity.

Do not for one moment believe that leadership comes only in one gender. If you think along those lines it demonstrates your ignorance of the positive influences and strengths that come from women. Women are the great leaders and influencers in our society today, they keep the Hellenic culture alive at home, and it is they who insist upon observing Hellenic customs and language, even though they may be in a mixed marriage relationship.

Leadership is synonymous with believing in one's self, having a balanced ego, confident, a good self esteem and healthy outlook at a spiritual level. Knowledge, education and good communication skills are an essential part of a leader's arsenal, for without them, all the other attributes are naught.

There are of course many other attributes, such as leading by example, mentoring, doing what is right, caring, supporting and developing others, dress and bearing, tone of voice, a commanding presence, showing emotion if appropriate and having a strong will to overcome life's challenges.

Having said all of the above, I wonder whether we at this stage of our lives, have taken on the mantle of leadership when it was offered, thrust or chosen by us. Did we have to battle the previous generation to obtain the mantle of leadership, was it done democratically, behind the scenes, handed down to us, or that we just created our own organization to meet a sudden crisis or as a result of like minded friends.

How do we recognize leadership and what is it about them that make others want to follow. Remembering that we in the Hellenic Diaspora are still suffering from that malady of all wanting to be "kapetanios".

I am not talking about leadership in high office, political or military levels, I am talking about the mums and dads who are leaders in their own community, about their children holding leadership positions., about men and women at work, professionals in academia, teachers, and let us not forget the grandparents who are passing on the culture and beliefs of an era gone by. Are they not also to be considered leaders?

Therefore consider for a moment what does leadership mean to you, how best can you apply your influence and leadership skills at home, in the community and on social media. I look forward to your feedback. WHY, because no matter what your point of view is, it's all important for the next generation.

We should NEVER be afraid to hand over the baton of influence and leadership to the next generation. I would like to compile a list of leadership attributes according to what the group feedback is and see if it can be applied in today's Hellenic Diaspora.



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