



## **Inspirational Leadership**

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It only takes one person to believe. That statement is littered across so many texts, over so many centuries – from spiritual literature, to the chronicles of the great explorers and inventors, to the field of professional sport. That belief may sometimes be described as single-mindedness, focus or vision – but they're all just words that describe a state of mind that is not only abnormal or exceptional, but one which is the defining hallmark of great and inspirational leaders.

I'm not simply talking about people whose names we all know – anyone can be an inspirational leader within his or her chosen field of endeavour – all it takes is an understanding and experience of the clear and present state of mind that sets inspirational leaders apart.

But first, what do I mean that it only takes one person to believe?

Many years ago, I worked with a client who was the National Sales Director of a major life assurance company. As Sales Director, he directed the troops – he had no direct influence over individual sales. But he told me that he “set his mind” to the achievement of \$274,390 new sales for a particular week – there was no science to the calculation of the amount, it just “felt” like the correct figure even though it was more than three times their normal week's sales.

On the Friday morning, an hour before their midday deadline, he stood in their New Business Department. At that moment, as a result of a number of policy cancelations, their new sales for the week stood at -\$14,000! Staff were telling him that he was deranged – but he retorted that he didn't want any of their negative energy getting in the way of the flow of business. In his own words, he described how “It was like standing in the middle of that large room, waving a magic wand. The 'phones started ringing all over the place, business was coming in from salesmen who hadn't had a decent sale in weeks. At five minutes to midday we had clocked up \$274,389.13 - 0.87c short of my goal! All I had to do was stick to my belief, it didn't matter what those around me thought.”

Something very similar is spoken of by Sir Alex Ferguson on the occasion of Manchester United's European Champions League Final victory over Bayern Munich in 1999. At the end of normal time, Bayern led United 1-0 – but Ferguson was fully convinced that United were going to win – he almost couldn't understand how it wasn't happening! And, yet, two minutes later Manchester United were crowned Champions of Europe, having scored two goals in extra time.

It only takes one person to believe – and those true believers are what we call inspirational leaders. We follow such leaders not because of what they tell us – but how they tell us, how their presence inspires. And, yes, we can all be inspirational leaders – in our careers and business lives, for our families, in every aspect of our lives. All we have to do is learn how to believe and, after that, learn how to exude that leadership presence.

Believing is not wishing, hoping or wanting. Believing is seeing, feeling, hearing, smelling and tasting the success you want – as if you have it already. Some people call it “visualization” – but that’s only part of the story. The science of how “belief” works confirms that our subconscious minds create our behaviour and reactions automatically. Those behaviours create our reality. In creating our behaviour, our subconscious minds use “programs” or “snapshots” that were impressed upon our subconscious minds – normally during our formative years, when we were children. So-called “normal” people do not understand that you can impress new snapshots on your subconscious mind and, as a result, change you reality.

This is done by using your five senses to immerse yourself in what it is like to achieve your desired outcome. It is most effective if you write down – using old-fashioned handwriting – what you see, feel, hear, smell and taste in that moment of achievement. The hand-eye coordination required in handwriting grabs your subconscious mind’s attention and, as a result, your subconscious mind is impressed with a brand new program.

After that, inspirational leaders impress those around them through their belief but, more importantly their presence. Presence, or charisma, is a phenomenon much experienced in the presence of great leaders. However, presence simply means that the inspirational leader is more present than all the so-called normal people. Research tells us that normal people are only 1% present – the greater part of their focus, their subconscious mind, being constantly focused in the past (on those old snapshots). To be an inspirational leader, all you need to do is invest more of your energy in the here and now. This is done, once again, using you five senses to engross yourself in what’s going on and what you’re actually doing NOW.

Recent research indicates that your ability to succeed is directly linked to your ability to pay attention. You can develop that ability, starting today, by deliberately taking time out each morning to see, feel, hear, smell and taste where you are. If you really want to fast-track the development of that ability, I would suggest meditation – it disciplines the mind to pay attention and, in doing so, will enable you be an inspiration to others, as a result of your own exceptional success.