

LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES:

Learning from the Greats

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As a leader, people will always tell you to “blaze your own trail”, which is good advice, but don’t let it get to your head. The world’s most successful leaders gathered much from their precursors. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. adopted the nonviolent civil disobedience that Mahatma Gandhi used during the Indian Independence Movement for the purposes of the American Civil Rights Movement. Another excellent example of leaders learning from their predecessors is that of Alexander the Great. One of the greatest military minds in history, he was tutored by none other than Aristotle, a leader in thought and an innovator in his own right. For much of Alexander’s life, he looked to Aristotle for counsel and guidance.

“blaze your own trail”

**“if we do not learn history,
we are doomed to repeat it”**

In learning from other leaders, it is important to not only know their successes but their mistakes as well. As many a history teacher would tell you, “If we do not learn history, we are doomed to repeat it”. That is why it so critical to read not only the works of the outstanding individuals, but also their biographies.

One can come to know a great deal about an individual simply by sharing in their experiences through the written word. Remember not to limit yourself to books, however. Absorb as much information from as many sources as you can, be it through the worldwide web, cinema, television, or whatever means you discover.

In leadership roles in your community, events are bound to occur which will be similar to ones you have been exposed to through study. In these situations, it is paramount that you draw on the actions of historical figures before making a final decision.

Throughout your quest for knowledge, blaze your own trail, but always make use of the paths that were cleared for posterity. If we don’t take full advantage of the examples of earlier periods, then all the works of those before us will be in vain. The past is one of your greatest resources, don’t forget to tap into it.

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