

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE ETHICAL LEADERS

Many people believe that leaders are born while others believe leadership is a learned skill. Ironically, both are true constructs as some are born with inherent skills and as a result are more influential than others. But all people can learn and develop skills that can enhance the talents we are born with. If people can develop leadership skills, then the real question is how does one develop as a leader and is there a way to approach leadership development that makes sense for individuals at all stages of responsibility?

1. Influence

Leadership starts with influence. The ability to influence people, operations, or organizations in the direction that an individual wishes is leading. Activities that enhance one's ability to exercise influence over people, operations, or organizations would logically be the building blocks for leader development. Developing influence is only part of effective leader development.

Just because one can effectively influence others does not mean that he or she makes good decisions or performs in an ethical manner.

2. Critical Thinking and Decision- Making

Learning how to think critically is an essential first step to ultimately making good first step to ultimately making good decisions. Depending on the leadership role and level of responsibility of the leader, the complexity of problems faced will increase as will the impact and gravity of the decisions being made.

However, developing one's ability to critically think and make sound timely decisions doesn't equate to leader development. We cannot escape the reality that being an influential decision maker will have consequences. For example, where solid ethical awareness from leaders is lacking, the results are often tragic. Developing leaders comprehensively and responsibly requires developing ethical awareness at all levels.

Leadership development is influence by career progression, personal growth, desire, and responsibility. Each level of development is dependent on having solid understanding and mastery of the level below it