

## What Makes a Good Leader?

By Ann N. Gatty, Ph.D.



What makes a good leader? Being authentic. An authentic leader is well versed at offering emotional support. It is becoming increasingly evident that everyone needs emotional support, including CEO's and presidents. How does a good leader encourage more emotional support among members of our workforce? Several strategies are available that demonstrate how offering emotional support is a key ingredient in what makes a good leader.

**Leadership is not role playing.** The personality that you display at work should be the same personality you display outside of work. Being authentic is what makes a good leader. Authentic leaders are not only self-aware of their strengths and weaknesses, they are mission driven. They drive for results. But most important is their ability to be genuine and lead with their heart. Leading with their heart allows them to show emotions, offer emotional support to others and accept emotional support in return.

Most employees expect that leaders will provide emotional support in their times of need. It seems that employees feel that part of their boss' job responsibility is to provide encouragement, understanding, and leniency to them if they are experiencing personal or professional difficulties. Authentic leaders believe that the whole culture should be supportive. They believe that employees also should develop the ability to offer emotional support to each other when life's waters get difficult to navigate. These leaders invest in the following strategies.

**Begin with communication.** A culture can develop a communication style that organically nurtures an implicit level of emotional support. This starts with open and non-judgmental communication and helpful feedback to all levels of employees and leaders. Authentic leaders know that showing emotional support can be delivered all the way up the chain of command, even reaching the CEO. Use communication strategies as an encouragement tool.

**Build in rejuvenation.** When individuals are emotionally and psychologically depleted, they become less effective at handling their jobs or working well with others. That is why leaders need to incorporate strategies that can assist with the emotional rejuvenation of employees. For example, leaders can build in some social activities after work to strengthen relationships with co-workers. They can encourage a few work breaks during the day to unplug from technology. These examples also can be part of an overall wellness program.

**Be inclusive.** Launching any employee development strategy, such as ones I have mentioned, should be as well planned as launching a new customer product. And they should include worker buy-in. In these examples, we are creating strategic emotional connection safety nets for maintaining employee health and wellness.



Building a supportive culture allows the workforce to be more productive in their daily work activities. Ask for buy-in from members of the work culture and listen to their advice to demonstrate that you respect their opinions. Get to know their backgrounds, personal goals and aspirations. Authentic leaders know that people thrive when there is respect and trust in the workplace, open honest communication, and a concern for an individual's wellbeing. What makes a good leader? Being authentic. Being willing to give and accept emotional support. Success is sure to follow.

### About the Author

Dr. Ann Gatty is a business development strategist. She helps her clients clarify the vision for their businesses, boost their leadership capabilities and add quality talent to help the clients reach their goals. Through a collaborative mentoring process, she and her clients create workable strategic business plans and success initiatives, while improving their workplace processes. Dr. Gatty is a frequent writer and contributor [www.AllBusiness.com](http://www.AllBusiness.com), [www.MarketingInsiders.com](http://www.MarketingInsiders.com), and [www.WomenOnBusiness.com](http://www.WomenOnBusiness.com). Her interactive speaking engagements assist participants in discovering new-found talents and skills that they can immediately apply in the workplace. Join her [Facebook Group, Strategic Thinking Summit Elites](#) for strategies you can implement to grow your business success and enjoy camaraderie with others entrepreneur members.