

So what would you say are the characteristics of a good leader? Of course that list would include:

- Vision,
- Communication,
- People skills,
- Character,
- Competence
- Boldness. T

This is what's called a *six-sided* leader. This kind of leader does a good job, but to be a leader who is *exemplary*, to be a leader that is not forgotten, and even dare say, go down in the history books, there is a *seventh side* of leadership. And that is called a servant's heart, or we could say serving heart.

Who comes to mind when you hear those characteristics? Gandhi? Mother Teresa? Doctor Martin Luther King? President Ronald Reagan? Billy Graham? What about John Wooden? He won ten NCAA basketball national championships in a 12-year period as head coach for the UCLA Bruins, including a record seven in a row. Tony Dungy? He led the Colts to victory in Super Bowl XLI, making him the first African American head coach to win the Super Bowl.

These men have been tremendously successful in the world and in their sport. The one thing that sets them apart is being a 7- sided leader: that means they're always looking to serve others. They are never too busy or self-important to give someone their time and attention.

Like Jesus, who said to his followers when they were arguing about who would be the greatest in their little band of brothers: Within minutes they were bickering over who of them would end up the greatest. But Jesus intervened: "Kings like to throw their weight around and people in authority like to give themselves fancy titles. It's not going to be that way with you. Let the senior among you become like the junior; let the leader act the part of the servant. Luke 22: 25 – 28 (MSG)

Jesus is saying what all of these modern day leaders knew to be true: if you want to be great, you have to serve others. People aren't impacted and influenced by leaders who are intimidating, domineering, or browbeating their players, modeling selfishness and pride. It's all too easy to feel having achieved the position of a leader that you're entitled to honor respect and all the perks of the job and position. But that is often the beginning of the end.

Proverbs 16:18 clearly states it: “Pride goes before destruction and haughtiness before a fall.”

It's those leaders who are humble and recognize the *honor* it is to be a leader know the truth of proverbs 11:2 : First pride, then the crash—the bigger the ego, the harder the fall.

And there's no better way to avoid that crash and burn scenario than by demonstrating humility than by serving others. It all comes down to what you have done and how you have contributed to the lives of others, as how you will be remembered. Remembered by your teammates. By your classmates. By the administration. By your community. By your family and friends.

We're going to take a minute for you to reflect on your current level and style of leadership.

How are you currently serving others in your role as a team leader or member?

How is that translating off the field or court into your classroom, school, home life and work?