What makes a great leader? Can leadership be learned or are great leaders born and not made? Being a control freak does not make you a leader. Have you had a supervisor who feels he or she is the only one who knows anything on the subject?

Are leaders born or made?

In the great response to the many phone calls I received this week regarding last week's column dealing with being a better employee, it became clear that many admitted taking advantage of their work place situation.

One caller who we will call Robin (not her real name) asked me, I use to be a good worker, came on time everyday and always volunteered for extra work and the supervisor never once said good job.

Robin went on to explain the employer has to realize when they have someone who has good work ethic, they must at the least treat them right. I have had a chance to laugh at a lot of funny stories I heard regarding supervisors.

In today's world of corporate America, many seem to share the belief that it is possible to send employees to a series of classes and *make them a leader*. Well, I am here today to alert

everyone that ‘Leaders are born, not made!’

How often have you seen people promoted into a position of leadership but they lack any of the qualities of a true leader?

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For centuries people have debated whether leaders are born or made.

Several decades ago, researchers started trying to answer the question. The debate goes on, even though we know the answer. It turns out to be a little of both. Leaders are sort of born and they’re always made.

In today’s industry, we have many managers and supervisors but few of them are leaders. Managers and supervisors come a dime a dozen. Sure, not everyone will make a good manager, or supervisor, but everyone, by nature, is a manger or supervisor.

In addition, it is also true that not every leader is a good manager or supervisor but every leader can be taught to be a good one if they so desire. When you find a supervisor who only cares about a title and tries to make everyone else seem like they don’t matter… that’s not a good supervisor.

Some try to define their position with education. A good supervisor can be someone without a college degree. Supervision can be effective when you have good people skills. Have you seen people talk about the current supervisor and say I could do that job better if I was the boss?

How many times have you laughed when they became boss? They were even worst than the boss that was there? Back stabbing and doing wrong to become a boss surely is not being a

team player.

What is a supervisor? By definition, a supervisor is ‘a person who exercises major administrative functions over another employee or employees.
These functions are hiring, evaluating, assigning work, disciplining, and dismissing.

In most cases, one step below a manager, a supervisor is just that, a person who supervises. Creativity is welcomed but, in most cases, the direction is provided by the manager. The immediate overseeing is done by the supervisor. Now, in no way, am I saying that supervisors are not creative. In most cases, they are.

What is a leader? By definition, a leader is ‘a person who rules or guides or inspires others.’ A leader is someone others are willing to follow, almost without question. They may not always make the right decision but they are confident in the decisions they make.

They are not afraid to admit when they are wrong and they know when to change direction when an inappropriate choice has been made. For, even after a few mistakes, a true leader will not lose the confidence of his or her followers.

People seek out leaders unconsciously and leaders step to the forefront almost instinctively. Leaders are recognized, not chosen. In short, leaders have something within them the others just don’t have. It is an intangible characteristic that can’t be explained but, when you see it, you will recognize it.

Having every employee on the job dislike you and you don’t care is not a good supervisor. It surely is not a true leader. A true leader accepts responsibility, everything from how they speak to how they act is part of being responsible. It is easy to follow them because you know where they are going and know they will lead you as well.

Leaders know they can do better when people are working together for one common goal. Sharing in leadership is part of this process. Making everyone accountable for what they do while judging success on the overall efforts of everyone.

“The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual. People who work together will win whether it’s against complex football defenses or the problems of modern society. Individual commitment to a group effort is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work,” said Vince Lombardi.

Leadership has been described as the process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task? Definitions inclusive of nature of leadership have also emerged.

Leadership is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen.

As an employee, if you do everything you’re responsible for and you do it well that will reflect positively on you. But shouldn’t everyone be doing this already? They *should,* right? It’s just too bad they don’t.

When you do more than you have to as long as you aren’t crossing over into someone else’s domain, the company gets more work out of you, work that may never have gotten done in the first place. You come out looking real good for showing initiative and actually developing/suggesting something new or a better way of doing something.

So thanks for all the calls this week about your employers and taking the time to share them with me. But remember when you go to work tomorrow make sure you ‘mind your business’ and be prepared to do what you are hired to do.

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