

What Kind of a LEADER ARE YOU

At a time when our country is facing war and questioning our country's leadership, is when we should be reflecting upon our own leadership styles. It isn't through trying to change those already in leadership roles that can affect real change in our country, but through the changing of how we lead ourselves and others in our lives that makes the significant difference in our day-to-day realities.

Whether you are a business leader, parent, or simply "leading" your own life, there are two types of leadership styles, *Inspiring* and *Controlling*. There are 10 main characteristics that help define the difference between these two types of leaders. We put them in juxtaposition, not to make one bad and/or good, but to simply bring awareness to your own leadership style so you can make a different choice if you find yourself falling into any one of the characteristics of the *Controlling Leader*.

An *Inspiring Leader* is authentic, operates from higher ground principles and makes their decisions coming from a place of love, whereas a *Controlling Leader* upholds a facade, operates from lower ground principles and is coming from a place of fear. In our world today, there is a shift that is happening among individuals as well as in the business world, from being ego-driven to soul-driven in our personal and business missions.

Following are the top 10 characteristics that define these leadership styles:

1.) An *Inspiring Leader* is open to change and is always looking for better and easier ways of doing things. Their decisions are based on the greater good of all and not solely on one individual. There is an ease about them because they live in divine flow trusting in a higher process. A *Controlling Leader* fights and resists change. They live in the past and because they have a need to control, often are working with hidden agendas to maintain this perceived control. They always seem stressed and are constantly pushing themselves and pushing others.

2.) An *Inspiring Leader* lives from their Soul and Spirit. Their family or business becomes the vehicle in which they assist others in changing and growing. They know who they are and why they are here and operate their life from a clear set of core values. A *Controlling Leader* lives from their ego and personality. They think they know it all and have a deep-seated need to be right. They use their family or business for self-recognition. They resist soul searching or searching for a deeper meaning in life.

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3.) An *Inspiring Leader* is flexible, responsive and adaptable.

They are connected to a bigger vision with "big picture thinking" and the awareness that we are all in this together! They are not threatened or intimidated by people with status or money. They accept 100% responsibility for their leadership style and not only admit but apologize when they are wrong. A *Controlling Leader* is inflexible, reactive and positional. They are disconnected from the bigger picture focusing on "what's in it for me." They are threatened or intimidated by people with more money or a higher position or status. They do not take responsibility for their leadership style, but place fault on others and will ignore the situation when an apology is in order.

4.) An *Inspiring Leader* acknowledges their strengths and weaknesses. They surround themselves with people that complement their weaknesses and capitalize on their own

strengths. A *Controlling Leader* denies their strengths and tries to cover up their weaknesses. They surround themselves with people who are less talented than themselves to make themselves look good.

5.) An *Inspiring Leader* will be solution-oriented, helping others to identify and solve their problems. A *Controlling Leader* will be problem-oriented focusing on the negative and what's wrong or who's wrong and stay stuck in the problem.

6.) An *Inspiring Leader* is always giving the credit away to others where a *Controlling Leader* will not only take the credit, but will do so even if it isn't theirs to take! As Lee Iacocca said, "One can accomplish great things when they no longer care who gets the credit."

7.) An *Inspiring Leader* builds people up, empowers them to really go for it and spawns other authentic leaders. They provide direction and guidance and encourage others to believe in themselves. A *Controlling Leader* keeps people down below their "level" wanting them to stay dependent and small. They provide very little direction and act as if they know it all.

8.) An *Inspiring Leader* unites the people in their family or organization. They pass on positive feedback that creates respect and unity among others where a *Controlling Leader* will pass on gossip and negative feedback creating division.

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9.) An *Inspiring Leader* creates an open forum for ideas to flow freely from everyone and encourages others to express their ideas. A *Controlling Leader* creates a forum for their own ideas and has a deep-seated need for it to be their idea and their way, becoming defensive or reactive to others feedback.

10.) An *Inspiring Leader* is emotionally connected to what's going on within the organization or family. They understand that quality time is not planned but is spontaneous and comes with quantity time. They feel the energy of those around them. They remember where they've come from and maintain compassion for others. A *Controlling Leader* "leads from the desk", and is out of touch with what's really going on within the dynamics and energy of the organization. They forget where they've come from and end up making decisions that can hurt people.

This list of characteristics helps to raise our awareness as to whether we are coming from a *controlling* or *inspiring* place in our lives. Awareness is the starting point to change. The next step is learning how to uncover the issue and/or suppressed energy within us that was causing us to control in the first place. Once the issue has been correctly identified, now we can release it, should we choose to. These are the keys to becoming an *Inspiring Leader* on a more consistent basis.