

Executive Briefing



"An army of a thousand is easy to find, but, ah, how difficult to find a general." (Chinese proverb)

What Great Leaders Know

An entrepreneur seeking a company leader knows exactly what that proverb means. Envision that thousand-person army out in the field, stopped behind a general looking over a bottomless canyon. You see the general now, but will you see him in the next moment? What's next?

A great leader would know what's next, because he would have planned ahead for the "what if?"

Many great leaders learn valuable lessons from mentors. Many possess intuitive natures, or hunches, that tell them what to do and when to do it.

Anyone who aspires to become a great leader should create his own list of traits to develop. Here are some behaviors for a good start:

- **L is for learning.** A great leader learns from failure. No one should think that leaders never fail. They do, because they are always doing things. The more you do, the greater your chances for failing, but also, the greater your chances for succeeding.

- **E is for excitement.** A great leader is excited about his vision, and this excitement makes others want to follow.

- **A is for asking "Why, who, when, what if?"** A great leader asks questions, learns the situation, and makes a decision about the best plan of action.

- **D is for decisiveness.** A great leader acts. Non-leaders don't want to make decisions, because inherent in decision-making is risk and accepting responsibility. Leaders know that decisions are necessary for forward movement.

- **E is for elevation.** A great leader likes to elevate others, because teams possess strength. Leaders will look for other people with leader potential to praise, mentor and promote.

- **R is for risk.** A great leader takes risks. He will march the opposite direction from the crowd. He will think of something no one else has thought of, and will share it. But if the crowd disagrees, he will pursue his idea with confidence.

What would *you* do, faced with that bottomless canyon?