



WHY PARTNERSHIP IS THE NEW LEADERSHIP



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BY TY BENNETT

Over a five-year period a survey was conducted of more than 5,000 leaders. These men and women were in leadership positions in multiple industries and at every level, from supervisors to CEOs, managers to C-suite executives.

In this survey, only one question was asked: As a leader, what do you want from your people? More than 75 percent answered with the one-word response: Commitment.

That's what we want, isn't it? We want our employees to be dedicated, to be all-in. We want them to be passionate and loyal. We want them to give their very best because they want to, not because they have to. We want them to be committed.

But here is the key: people are not committed to jobs. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that today's average worker will hold 10 different jobs before age 40 and will have 15 to 20 jobs by the time they retire.

People are ultimately committed to people. It's relationships that engender trust, respect, accountability and commitment. The old adage said, "Leadership is based on title, position or authority." But people don't follow titles – they follow people.

Have you ever heard the saying, "People join companies but leave bosses?" It's the leadership they are committed to.

That's why in today's world, partnership is the new leadership. A new economy requires a new approach to leadership, and if what we want as leaders is the commitment of our people, then we need to partner with them in order to foster an environment that naturally creates commitment.

The idea of "partnership is the new leadership" is the rallying cry for effective management in today's world. In the 1980s, Ken Blanchard changed the conversation from management to leadership and began to refocus, retool and renew the approach to leadership. Our world has continued to change since then and at an even faster pace. To be relevant, influential and successful today, partnership in leadership needs to be the approach.

Title does not give you the right to be heard, value does. In today's world, people don't want to be talked *at*, they want to be talked *with*. Partner leaders approach leadership by building relationships, adding value, involving their people and communicating in a conversational manner. That's what makes them the type of leaders that make people better, the type of leaders that create buy-in, and the type of leaders that inspire a culture of commitment.

What every leader says they want from their people is commitment, but the truth is, the ultimate commitment is when our people step up as leaders themselves, when they take an ownership mentality, when they see the same vision we see and act accordingly. The ultimate goal of partner leadership is to create more leaders. That is not only what today's world needs, but also what it demands. ■

Ty Bennett is the author of four books including "Partnership is The New Leadership." He is a sought after keynote speaker and leadership trainer. Learn more at tybennett.com.

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