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# Servant Leadership Principles, Practices and Ethics



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Conflicts, disharmonies and disagreements are daily global occurrences. It may take herculean efforts by citizens of Guyana to incorporate and inculcate Servant Leadership principles, practices and ethics at all levels of the society. Servant Leadership will be a valuable asset as Guyana celebrates its 50th. Golden Jubilee on 26 May 2016, and works toward National economic, social, spiritual, cultural and entrepreneurial improvement.

Seven KEY items are Vision, Team, Plan, Resources, Execution, Leadership and Evaluation.

- **VISION:** It is critical to clearly establish vision in consultation with others, to enable refinements. The BIG PICTURE will be supremely helpful if goals are to be accomplished.
- **TEAM:** No person possesses all knowledge, so it will be smart to work in teams to boost cross fertilization of ideas, plans, hopes, dreams, and goals. Inclusion of many persons with various skill sets will move the particular vision toward execution.

**DO NOT SELECT ONLY PERSONS WHO WILL AGREE WITH YOU**, as critical constructive evaluations will be needed.

- **PLAN:** Successful ventures start with a plan that must be constantly updated with applicable timelines for each line item.
- **RESOURCES:** The availability and quantity of human, financial and material resources can be critical at various stages to ensure project success.
- **EXECUTION:** Many superb visions, ideas or plans die at this phase for many reasons, including lack of project management skills. A “take charge, get it done” person, will enable successful execution.
- **LEADERSHIP:** The goal of leadership is to set the example from the top, utilizing active listening. To be successful, servant leaders need to be strategic listeners, celebrate successes, coach DO NOT TELL, and cultivate learning attitudes.
- **EVALUATION:** It is very important to do constructive critical analysis at various stages, to review and to make the necessary refinements aimed at present and future improvements.

The term Servant-Leadership was first coined in a 1970 essay titled “The Servant as Leader”, by Robert K. Greenleaf (1904-1990). Greenleaf, born in Terre Haute, Indiana, USA, spent most of his organizational life in the field of management research, development, and education at AT&T. Greenleaf’s ten attributes to Servant Leadership are: Listening, Empathy, Healing, Awareness, Persuasion, Conceptualization, Foresight, Stewardship, Commitment to the growth of people, and Building community.

1. **Listening:** Traditionally, and also in servant leadership, managers are required to have communication skills as well as the competence to make decisions. A servant leader has the motivation to listen actively to subordinates and support them in decision identification.
2. **Empathy:** A servant leader attempts to understand and empathize with others. Workers may be considered not only as employees, but also

as people who need respect and appreciation for their personal development.

3. **Healing:** A great strength of a Servant Leader is the ability for healing one's self and others. A servant leader tries to help people solve their problems and conflicts in relationships, because he wants to encourage and support the personal development of each individual.
4. **Awareness:** A servant leader needs to gain general awareness and especially self-awareness. He has the ability to view situations from a more integrated, holistic position. As a result, he gets a better understanding about ethics and values.
5. **Persuasion:** A Servant Leader does not take advantage of their power and status by coercing compliance; they rather try to convince those they manage.
6. **Conceptualization:** A servant leader thinks beyond day-to-day realities. That means he has the ability to see beyond the limits of the operating business and also focuses on long term operating goals.
7. **Foresight:** Foresight is the ability to foresee the likely outcome of

a situation. It enables the servant leader to learn about the past and to achieve a better understanding about the current reality. It also enables the servant leader to identify consequences about the future. This characteristic is closely related to conceptualization.

8. **Stewardship:** CEOs, staffs and trustees have the task to hold their institution in trust for the greater good of society. Servant leadership is seen as an obligation to help and serve others. Openness and persuasion are more important than control.
9. **Commitment to the growth of people:** A servant leader is convinced that people have an intrinsic value beyond their contributions as workers. Therefore, they should nurture the personal, professional and spiritual growth of employees
10. **Building community:** A servant leader identifies means to build a strong community within his organization and wants to develop a true community among businesses and institutions.

One may recognize President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865 USA), Mahatma

Gandhi Ji (1869-1948 India), President Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948 Pakistan), Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968 USA), Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed Al Thani (1825-1913 Qatar), Mother Teresa (1910-1997 Macedonia, Ireland & India) and President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela (1918-2013 South Africa), as 7 Exemplars of Servant Leadership.

Guyana with an inspiring list of 10 Guyanese comes to mind, including the late Peter D'Aguiar, Entrepreneur & Philanthropist; the late Nathaniel Critchlow, Trade Unionist; UG Vice Chancellor Dr. Dennis Irvine; Ambassador Oscar Clarke, CCH; Justice Donald Trotman, CCH; Sattaur Gafoor, CCH, Entrepreneur & Philanthropist; Dr. Yesu Persaud, CCH, Chairman of Boards & Entrepreneur; Justice Dr. Mohamed Shahabuddeen, International Court of Justice; the late Harold Davis, Chairman of Boards; and the late Sir Donald Edward Jackson, Speaker Legislative Council.

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