



A New Book About Leadership

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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Lee Iacocca is an 83 year old American leader who has just released yet another best-selling book. He is a self-made man who is probably best known for saving *Chrysler Corporation* from financial ruin but has also created an extremely impressive list of accomplishments that include the renovation of *Ellis Island*, overseeing creation of the minivan, organizing *Join Lee Now* (a group whose goal is to find a cure for diabetes). He is also a philanthropist who is committed to feeding the hungry.

Mr. Iacocca identified nine specific traits that are important for leadership in his new book "Where Have All the Leaders Gone?" They include:

1. Curiosity
2. Creativity
3. Communication
4. Character
5. Courage
6. Conviction
7. Charisma
8. Competence
9. Common Sense

Not every leader has all of the nine traits. In fact, some people are stronger in specific areas than in others and this allows them to be more suitable for some things than others. It is probably more important, for example, for a leader who is facing war to have courage than charisma whereas a politician usually benefits from charisma/

Mr. Iacocca also states that the crucial situation for leaders is CRISIS. It is easy to talk about things we would do if there is a problem and yet another thing to do them when the crisis occurs. We will likely all remember the powerful role that Mayor Rudy Giuliani played during and after the September 11th terrorist attack on New York a few years ago. His leadership skills not only helped to calm people but also brought organization to chaos.

Many individuals claim that they are "followers" and not "leaders" but I believe that every one of us is a leader in some capacity. Each of us has some of the traits that Mr. Iacocca has identified and we use them in various ways in our lives. Leadership is about influencing others and we all do that. It might be in our work, families or communities. We do not need to be the head of a large organization or movement to be classed as a leader. In fact, the smallest of activities can be viewed as a form of leadership. Think of the quiet teenager whose unusual choice of clothing starts a trend or the neighbour who mows the lawn in a pattern that later becomes popular throughout the block.

Whether we know it or not, we are all leaders in some manner. Even if we do not deliberate step out in a leadership role, we are being watched, admired and copied by others.

Which of the nine traits that Iacocca identified do you have as strengths? Which ones do you want to develop? Which would you use during a crisis?

It's just something to think about.