

ARMY GUIDE TO LEADERSHIP

After graduating from high school and entering college, I spent nine years with the Tennessee Army National Guard. Looking back on it, that experience was better for me than perhaps I realized at the time, because of the Army's emphasis on discipline, organizational structure and leadership.

After all, the Army knows something about leadership, and it has identified four essential elements that leaders need to understand in order to have an impact on their organizations. Here they are:

- **Your leadership role.** Start with self-knowledge. You must have a solid understanding of your strengths, skills and values in order to be authentic and authoritative. You also must know what your followers want, because they're the people who will ultimately decide how effective you are and how successful you'll become.
- **Your followers' needs.** You can't manage everyone the same way. A new hire requires more supervision than a veteran, for example. You have to know your people – their personal experiences as well as their professional expertise – and you need a good understanding of human nature in order to influence them to do their best.
- **Communication.** Telling employees what to do has many dimensions: your actual words, your tone of voice and body language, the vehicle you use (email, video, etc.), and so on. You've got to know what subtle cues employees will pick up on even when your message seems clear and straightforward.
- **The specifics.** Effective leadership is situational. The tactics you apply in a crisis are different from those you would use when time isn't tight. You've got to read each situation so you can choose the best course of action.



Sound like some principles that will work in Life Care and Century Park? You bet!

– Beecher Hunter