

Leaders Do Draw Criticism

Whatever position you occupy in Life Care and Century Park, you are a leader. Based on the qualities they possess, some of the best leaders in our companies are certified nursing assistants. Leaders are needed for every discipline.

One of the occupational hazards of being a leader is receiving criticism (not at all constructive, by the way). When that happens, it's easy to go under, throw in the towel or bail out. Many have faded out of leadership because of intense criticism.

I firmly believe that the leader who does anything that is different or worthwhile or visionary can count on criticism. In this regard, I appreciate the remarks made by President Theodore Roosevelt, which are often quoted (and should be!):

It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly, who errs, and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; who does actually try to do the deed; who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotion and spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly.

Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat.

To Roosevelt's words, I add a resounding *Amen!*

And this advice: A sense of humor is of paramount importance to the leader. Many of God's servants are simply too serious. Leaders must have the ability to take criticism, and they must have the ability to laugh at themselves.

Equally important, of course, is the ability to sift from any criticism that which is true, that which is fact. We are foolish if we respond angrily to every criticism. Who knows? God may be using those very words to teach us some essential lessons, painful though they may be. Isn't this what Proverbs 27:5-6 is saying?

Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy (ESV).

Pay attention to the word *friend* in these verses. Friendship is not threatened by honest criticism. It is strengthened.

Thank you for being – and showing – that you are a leader!

– Beecher Hunter