

The Pillsbury Example

The best leaders are those who understand they have a servant's spirit and role.

Businessman Harvey Mackay, who authored the book, *Swim with the Sharks*, wrote a newspaper column about the importance of those who lead being willing to do any kind of work that was required in the mission of the company or organization. As an example of one who proved his leadership on the factory floor, he cited Philip Pillsbury of the Pillsbury milling family. Mackay wrote:

"The tips of three of his fingers were missing. That's the unmistakable mark of a journeyman grain miller, albeit a somewhat less-than-dexterous one. (Philip) Pillsbury had an international reputation as a connoisseur of fine foods and wines, but to the troops, his reputation as a man willing to do a hard, dirty job was the one that mattered ... and you can be sure everyone was aware of it."

Pillsbury's understanding of this principle was a primary reason for the success of his organization. When he took over control of his family's flour company in 1940, it had sales of \$47 million. Pillsbury, however, greatly expanded the business further, acquiring more flour mills and related facilities, while also entering the consumer goods market. At the end of his tenure in 1952, the company had sales of more than \$300 million.

The most effective leaders are those who see themselves as servants. They are the ones willing to do whatever it takes, working shoulder to shoulder with their associates, in Life Care, American Lifestyles and Life Care at Home.

We are grateful for their personal examples.

--Beecher Hunter