

The Unassuming Leader

Herman Hesse in *Journey to the East* tells a story about a group of travelers on a trip who were accompanied by a man named Leo.

Leo carried the heavy bags, did the cooking, prepared and maintained the campsites, and even inspired the group by singing them songs and telling them stories. But halfway through their travels, Leo departed from the group.

The group continued on their journey, though they were all saddened by Leo's sudden departure. It wasn't long before a few arguments broke out, and the synergy of the group began to deteriorate. In his absence, Leo was blamed for things that were misplaced or broken. Finally, everyone decided it would be better to disband and go their separate ways.

Many years later, one of the travelers ran into Leo at the offices of the company that sponsored that long-ago trip. It turned out that Leo was not just an employee of the organization, but the founder.

Quiet, unassuming Leo had been the glue that kept the group moving forward. His leadership had been priceless, even to those who were not aware of his authority.

True leadership, you see, is recognizable, and appreciated, when one experiences it.

– Beecher Hunter