

“Why do leaders not need to be perfect?”

To be a leader is one thing, but to be a perfect leader is another.

Pierre Rhabi said “We must without doubt, through reaching the depths of our consciousnesses, set aside our arrogance and learn simple acts that connect us to reality.” Reality? Yes, reality.

A leader is a person who helps people become aware of their responsibilities as far as attaining a common objective using group synergy. This leader helps people surpass themselves in order to gain maximum results.

Does a leader need to be perfect in order to be successful? Must they reach perfection to succeed in climbing the ladder?

A flood of questions can cross our minds. Before beginning all conceptualizations, we can say that a leader does not need to be perfect in order to achieve big things.

Why does a leader therefore not need to be perfect? We will try to use the following essay to answer this colossal question.

To our readers we remind ab initio that perfection is a concept that escapes humanity; as such the author calls for suggestions and comments that will be impartially paraphrased for the improvement of this modest article.

Prologue

In order to clarify something, it is thus logical to get to know its contours and comprehend its meaning. That is why it is necessary to define certain concepts that could assume another meaning with other French terms.

Leader: as aforementioned, a leader is the director of any group, in particular when he or she knows how to lead this group after him or her. Augustin defines a leader in his article as a person who heads an organization, on which he or she has a demonstrable influence and who boosts people to triumphant results.

Perfect: that for which one cannot conceive of anything better or superior, that which brings together all conceivable and desirable qualities

To rephrase this, why do those in power not need to unite all conceivable qualities?

Detailed Exposition of Arguments

I would like to preface the development of this text with a picturesque anecdote.

In a naval company in Switzerland, in their daily work, a professional group needed a leader in order to ensure its smooth operation. Among the others, this leader was demanding, imposing, intelligent and knew almost everything. He was the most coveted leader of the company and some called him “the perfect leader” because he led this cell so well.

However he had disability since birth. He never wanted to show to the workers that he was disabled, and that his leg was a robotic leg he had to take off each night and put on every morning. As justification for his slight limp, he would say “I have a bad knee.” He said to himself, “the day these workers know what I am, I will no longer have authority over them. I will no longer be the perfect leader that they swear by, because they will ask how a disabled man can lead them.”

One day the company landed an expensive, naval, construction project. The feasibility studies required the leader to go down to the ground for the implementation and installation of the work site.

While showing the position for the wall casing of the wharf, he slipped and fell to the ground from halfway up. The workers, aware of the shallowness of the water, said to themselves that he would not need help; he would be able to swim and get out on his own. The current of the water was so strong that the robotic leg was carried away in the current.

With only one leg and out of breath, the young leader lost his life before the workers had time to reach him. However, while he drowned, his workers heard him crying out: “Help me please, I am disabled, I don’t know how to get out”. This made the workers laugh, as they knew very well that their leader was not disabled.

During the sad proceedings, one worker stated, crying, “it wasn’t his body that led us but his person, so why did he hide his disability from us? If we had known about it we could have protected him against all eventualities, since he made us better people...”

I wonder if I must continue the story or set out thematic arguments. Sorry dear reader, the story stops here in favor of developing the theme.

We naturally have within us a naive trait that require perfect people as our leaders in companies or at the center of small groups. It is clear that these leaders are people of tremendous values and rare qualities, but beyond that, these are not extraordinary people. They also have common faults.

Boris Cyrulnik said “The desire for perfection probably goes back to the origins of humanization, when shingles had to be cut to build the first wind breaking structures, to sculpt the first arrows and spears; each tool and weapon had to be absolutely perfect. Otherwise you were killed.”

The vague hope for perfection is a defense mechanism against anxiety. However the only perfection that exists is imperfection. Imperfection supports evolution, that is to say, adaptation to all environments. These evolutions are impermanent.

We all have examples of leaders with abysmal flaws. Maybe leadership does not come without some flaws. It is therefore fitting to underline that a leader must know how to use both: his strengths in order to succeed, his flaws to avoid losing (time, confidence, legibility, determination, involvement...)

When we try to conceal our flaws, we build up walls that hold back our actions and fracture our self confidence. In fact, we are the ones who fracture our being into pieces in order to reach an ideal.

I thus like to say "people must ideologize instead of idealizing".

Hervé, a blogger, says perfection is a subjective notion; seeking to reach it pushes people to be too demanding of themselves and drives them on an endless quest that only leads to disillusionment.

As an example: nowadays, we are plagued by current trends. Women want to fit in and thus want a beauty filled with perfection and lavishness. With the help of makeup and photo retouching, their skin becomes completely smooth and without any blackheads or pimples, to an almost inhuman effect.

It is not important to reach this relative perfection. Everyone has physical characteristics that differentiate them from the perfect feature. Trying to escape reality by comparing oneself to a perfect typology is to chase a dream which is impossible to realize.

It is the same with a leader, imperfection holds a place in their life. They have to deal with, because that's what differentiates them from other people. Their particular qualities must be fully stimulated and imperfections must be concealed. One does not ask for perfection from a leader but rather for continuous improvement. To do so, a leader has to do the following addressed in the bullet points below:

Improve your flaws but do not erase all your rough edges:

The first attribute of a leader is to strive to become the best, without trying to imitate anyone or follow some criteria for perfection. If you do so, you move away from what makes you different. Imperfections are what makes someone unique to their gender, interesting and capable of standing out in a crowd.

Examples:

We all watch soccer and when we select a soccer team (a selection made on size), if it is composed only of the best in the world (best goalkeeper, defenders, mediators, attackers), the result will not be the best; because they will not be complementary to each other. Since all players are full of themselves, they will want to show that they are really better than the other people who could have been selected in their place. The whole team will lack in simplicity and dynamism. This supposedly best team will miss the point of the exercise, which is to win and not to show that they are much better. Sometimes, a slower player would have been better than the top one for any type of play.

Your rough edges are what help you live in cosmic equilibrium. This concept is embodied by the fact that a person needs their qualities and imperfections to live and make their relatives and friends live. You do not have to be a perfect leader in front of your staff or in front of people you lead, you need to be a leader who improves their flaws and maximizes those qualities to achieve great results.

Keep your energy to act purposefully

In seeking perfection, one often gets the opposite effect; we lose a lot of authenticity. In addition, it will save a lot of time and an enormous amount of energy to invest in the best actions.

Seek to improve, but do not try to become perfect. The ultimate goal of your improvement is not perfection. Not only is its pursuit futile, but the closer you get to it, the more it will hurt your image, dear leader. Since you will be unable to live and lead people who are imperfect, you will be too demanding or more demanding of them, and you will see that they do not always do what you ask of them. This is normal because you are floating in the clouds of perfection while they are in the clouds of improvement. They are afraid of not being as good as you.

A leader who becomes perfect will quickly become out of synch with the group with which they interact, since the environment is in constant flux. It is not static. The desire for perfection has an exorbitant psychological and emotional toll. It is a form of mental rigidity which is difficult to deal with. I repeat, this quest is futile, and it makes everyone around the leader unhappy.

Accept your flaws and work to improve; but aim to "become a better version of yourself and not a perfect version" in order to avoid frustration.

Interface between improvement and quest for perfection

From the moment your quest becomes an obsession, you believe that one of your flaws is the cause of all, and even when everyone says there is no problem you persist. This puts you in a bad state of mind and can greatly affect your leadership ability.

Personal improvement requires effort and a few sacrifices, while perfection, put into perspective, requires privations, unheard-of sufferings, and unstoppable pains for something that one will not even have in the end.

Stay positive, dear leader, and rejoice in each step forward, instead of comparing yourself to models of theoretical perfection. Be inspired by models but do not try to look like them in every way. Continue to move forward and progress with your imperfections while making day-to-day progress.

The big problem is that authority is something that interests everyone, and we do not realize what is behind it. For the visible aspect to have flavor and consistency, it is necessary to be in relation with the invisible, because it is the invisible that creates the visible. In order for perfection to be an objective idea, it must be contrasted with imperfection, because it is the latter that creates it.

Transactional analysis researchers have identified a plurality of compelling concepts that some leaders require. Especially:

Being perfect: it compels leaders to strive for perfection. As it is impossible to reach it, leaders fear failure, and small mistakes destabilize them. They become permanently dissatisfied as well.

Being strong: this concept requires leaders to not show their weaknesses, to be on the defensive, to feel attacked by the slightest criticism. Augustin Sakodi says in his article "Can You Become a Leader": "Never try to fight criticism, but consider it as proof of your progress."

These two concepts, chosen from among many others that leaders take on to reach perfection, blur their images, eat up their time and erodes their leadership.

It is by freeing oneself from these constraints, by accepting to be imperfect, vulnerable, not having to prove anything to anyone except by the results of our actions, that we tinge our ornamental leadership.

Because we do not control imperfections, we must tame them.

Leaders must clearly identify their imperfections, regardless of how painful this exercise may be emotionally. It is by identifying them that we are able to diminish their hold on us (complete eradication would be utopian). Then comes the stage where you have to tame these imperfections, which can have consequences for others and for yourself.

- On others, the idea is to limit the damage (for example, if you recognize that you get angry very quickly, you can limit your public exchanges...)
- On yourself: the challenge is to be able to handle it. Assume that people do not require perfection or change from you. We do not want you to change into a better person, but rather to act more effectively given your flaws. Because behind this subtlety, there are a lot of benefits.

To be a good leader is not to become perfect or to be good at everything; it is rather to be excellent on certain points, to have certain qualities, to highlight these qualities to reach the maximum.

Compared to an iceberg, leaders also have two sides.

Skills: what leaders do (what is fully visible in front of everyone)

Nature: who they are (not necessarily visible to all)

It is usually the latter that bears the flaws of a leader. Whatever skills we have, all beings are flawed but it is far from us to use religion as our frame of reference. The harm is when we are unable to dominate our flaws, they become a disturbance in everyday life for those around us. It is necessary for leaders to recognize their imperfections, work on them, and make sure that it does not affect their leadership.

The vastness of perfection is even seen in language: translations are always imperfect. Precisely, because there are never two perfectly equivalent words between two languages. Or they are different, or their affective connotations change according to people. It is this imperfection that allows the evolution of language, which promotes poetry and semantic creativity.

Do not live with an obsession that forces you to claim for yourself more than you are. Give what you have to offer today, nature will be shaped by what you have, so that you can offer something

tomorrow or the next day. Therefore, avoid giving away all that you have when you are not asked for your maximum. If one thing requires you to offer x, y, and z efforts, and you can only offer x and y efforts at first, do it! It is by being on the lookout that you will know how to add the missing z and finally complete the request.

High Qualities \leq Great Leader \geq Big flaws

Some people say, the desire to do well, to do better is a considerable skills that makes people excel. I agree with you. But I must hammer or better say pound on it: dear leader you must know that: To do well is not to make things perfect, but rather to do the best that we can, knowing that it will be imperfect. Therefore, we have to accept that those who we lead and love see this human imperfection in what we do and will help us improve on it. This is how we will improve our self-being and our know-how.

As this article that you read shows, it contains a lot of imperfections, but with the remarks and corrections of the main readers, it could verge on beautiful and be the bestseller.

Limited by pagination and conciseness, it is in these weak words, that we tried to give our opinion on this great question which is "Why do leaders not need to be perfect? "