



# How to Lead When You are Not the Boss





# Introduction

- Real leadership is never a matter of mere formal authority.





# Leadership

- Leaders are effective when other people acknowledge them as such:
  - By listening seriously to their ideas, valuing and following their suggestions for action, and turning to them for advice.





# Opportunities to Lead

- Opportunities to lead aren't limited to times when you have formal authority over a particular team or venture.
- When you step forward and demonstrate leadership, you will contribute value to the project or enterprise and strengthen your leadership skills.





# Establish Goals

- People accomplish the most when they have a clear set of objectives.
- It follows that any group's first order of business is to write down exactly what it hopes to achieve.





# Establish Goals

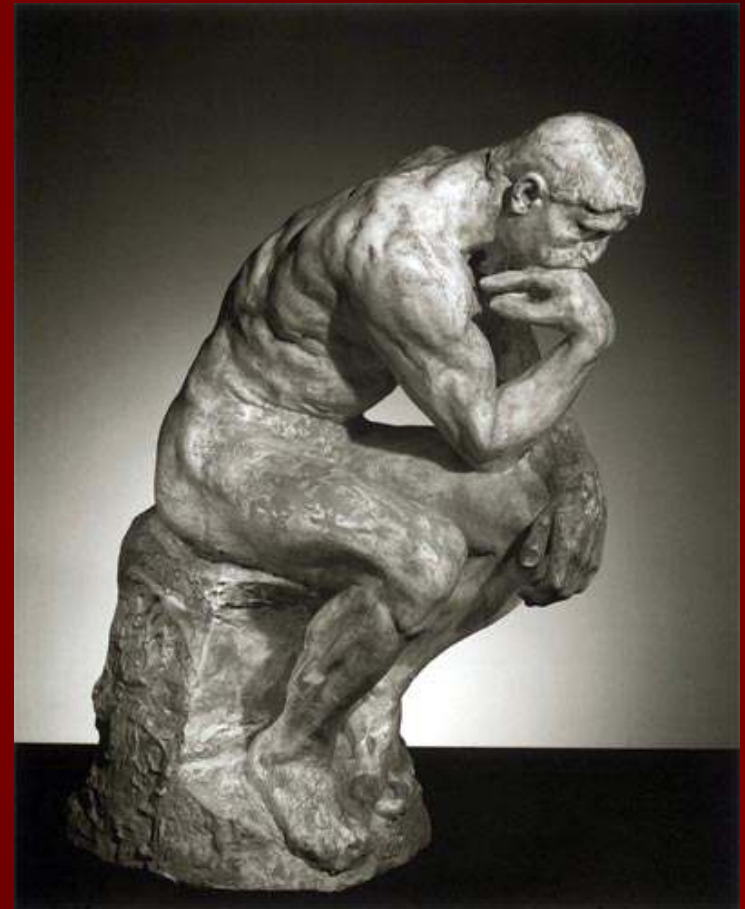
- The person who asks the question "Can we start by clarifying our goals here?" and who then assumes the lead in discussing and drafting those goals is automatically taking a leadership role, whatever his or her position.





# Think Systematically

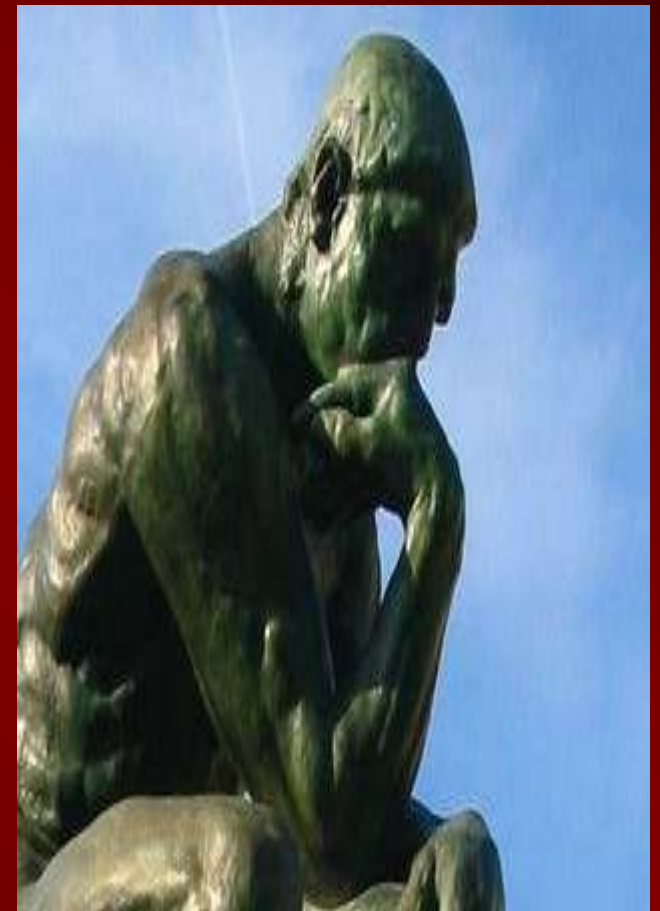
- Observe your next meeting:
  - people typically plunge right into the topic at hand and start arguing over what to do.





# Think Systematically

- Effective leaders, by contrast, learn to think systematically, that is:
  - they gather and lay out the necessary data,
  - analyze the causes of the situation,
  - and propose actions based on this analysis.





# Think Systematically

- In a group, leaders help keep participants focused by asking appropriate questions:
  - Do we have the information we need to analyze this situation?
  - Can we focus on figuring out the causes of the problem we're trying to solve?





# Learn from Experience

- While it's happening teams often plow ahead on a project, then conduct a review at the end to figure out what they learned.
- But it's more effective for teams (or individuals) to learn as they go along.





# Learn from Experience

- Why is this ongoing process more effective than an after-action review?
- The events are fresh in everyone's mind.
- And the team can use what they learn from each minireview to make needed adjustments to their work processes or their goals.





# Engage Others

- A high-performing team engages the efforts of every member, and effective team leaders seek out the best fit possible between members' interests and the tasks that need doing.





# Engage Others

- Suggest writing down a list of chores and matching them up with individuals or subgroups.
- If no one wants a particular task, brainstorm ways to make that task more interesting or challenging.
- Help draw out the group's quieter members so that everyone feels a part of the overall project.





# Provide Feedback

- If you're not the boss, what kind of feedback can you provide?
- One thing that's always valued is simple appreciation:
  - "I thought you did a great job in there."





# Provide Feedback

- Sometimes, too, you'll be in a position to help people improve their performance through coaching.





# Provide Feedback

- Effective coaches ask a lot of questions:
  - How did you feel you did on this part of the project?
- They recognize that people may try hard and fail anyway:
  - What made it hard to accomplish your part of the task?
- They offer thoughtful suggestions for improvement, being careful to explain the observation and reasoning that lie behind them.





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