



Our governments lack genuine leadership

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It doesn't matter if we're talking about keeping the government open, getting the national debt under control, upgrading our infrastructure, reforming our immigration system or making sure everyone has access to decent health care – one reality is becoming painfully obvious.

None of our leaders – local or national, public or private, conservative or liberal – seem to understand what constitutes genuine leadership.

As its core, leadership is about credibility. Whether or not an individual has this intangible yet indispensable quality – more than any other single characteristic – determines whether or not they will be successful.

On a fundamental level, credibility is related to how well leaders have the following three bases covered: technical competence, human relations proficiency and desire; i.e., the motivation to use their technical competence and human relations proficiency to effect positive change. All three bases must be covered to be truly effective.

In order to be technically competent, leaders have to do their homework. There are no shortcuts to becoming knowledgeable about the complex architecture underlying problems and their potential solutions.

Technical know-how, however, is irrelevant if a leader does not possess the people skills that form the foundation for all productive relationships. Knowing what needs to be done is immaterial if a leader does not know how to influence and persuade others.

Finally, without the passion needed to merge expertise with empathy, it really doesn't matter how smart you are with things or how savvy you are with people. If your heart is not in the right place, you are never going to be effective as a leader.

Real leaders also understand that people are more important than policies and relationships are more important than rules, because customization is more important than conformity and individuals are more important than institutions.

We need leaders with credibility.

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