

# The **Canadian** Institute of Marketing

e x c e l l e n c e   i n   p r o f e s s i o n a l   d e v e l o p m e n t

## Integral ingredients to becoming a leader

By James R. 'Doc' Halliday MBA., FCIinst.M., RPM., CMC

Business Improvement Advocate - Strategic Imagineer

dochalliday@shaw.ca



### Listening

“When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen.” - Ernest Hemingway - Listening is the foundation of any good relationship. Great leaders listen to what their customers and prospects want and need, and they listen to the challenges those customers face. They listen to colleagues and are open to new ideas. They listen to shareholders, investors, and competitors.

### Storytelling

“Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world today.” -Robert McAfee Brown - After listening, leaders need to tell great stories to sell their products, but more important, to sell their ideas. Storytelling is what captivates people and drives them to take action. Whether you're telling a story to one prospect over lunch, a boardroom full of people, or thousands of people through an online video - storytelling wins customers.

### Authenticity

“I had no idea that being your authentic self could make me as rich as I've become. If I had, I'd have done it a lot earlier.” -Oprah Winfrey. Great leaders are who they say they are, and they have integrity beyond compare. Vulnerability and humility are hallmarks of the authentic leader and create a positive, attractive energy. Customers, employees, and media all want to help an authentic person to succeed. There used to be a divide between one's public self and private self, but the social Internet has blurred that line. Tomorrow's leaders are transparent about who they are online, merging their personal and professional lives.

### Transparency

“As a small businessperson, you have no greater leverage than the truth.” -John Whittier. There is nowhere to hide anymore, and businesspeople who attempt to keep secrets will eventually be exposed. Openness and honesty lead to happier staff and customers and colleagues. More



important, transparency makes it a lot easier to sleep at night - unworried about what you said to whom, a happier leader is a more productive one.

### Team Playing

“Individuals play the game, but teams beat the odds.” -SEAL Team Saying. No matter how small your organization, you interact with others every day. Letting others shine, encouraging innovative ideas, practicing humility, and following other rules for working in teams you become a more likeable leader. You’ll need a culture of success within your organization, one that includes out-of-the-box thinking.

### Responsiveness

“Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it.” -Charles Swindoll. The best leaders are responsive to their customers, staff, investors, and prospects. Every stakeholder today is a potential viral sparkplug, for better or for worse, and the winning leader is one who recognizes this and insists upon a culture of responsiveness. Whether the communication is email, voice mail, a note or a tweet, responding shows you care and give your customers and colleagues a say, allowing them to make a positive impact on the organization.

### Adaptability

“When you’re finished changing, you’re finished.” -Ben Franklin. There has never been a faster-changing marketplace than the one we live in today. Leaders must be flexible in managing changing opportunities and challenges and nimble enough to pivot at the right moment. Stubbornness is no longer desirable to most organizations. Instead, humility and the willingness to adapt mark a great leader.

### Passion

“The only way to do great work is to love the work you do.” -Steve Jobs. Those who love what they do don’t have to work a day in their lives. People who are able to bring passion to their business have a remarkable advantage, as that passion is contagious to customers and colleagues alike. Finding and increasing your passion will absolutely affect your bottom line.

### Surprise and Delight

“A true leader always keeps an element of surprise up his sleeve, which others cannot grasp but which keeps his public excited and breathless.” -Charles de Gaulle. Most people like surprises in their day-to-day lives. Likeable leaders under-promise and over-deliver, assuring that



customers and staff are surprised in a positive way. There is a plethora of ways to surprise without spending extra money - a smile. We all like to be delighted — surprise and delight create incredible word-of-mouth marketing opportunities.

### Simplicity

“Less isn’t more; just enough is more.” -Milton Glaser. The world is more complex than ever before and yet what customers often respond to best is simplicity — in design, form, and function. Taking complex projects, challenges, and ideas and distilling them to their simplest components allows customers, staff, and other stakeholders to better understand and buy into your vision. We humans crave simplicity, and so today’s leader must be focused and deliver simplicity.

### Gratefulness

“I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought, and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder.” -Gilbert Chesterton. Likeable leaders are ever grateful for the people who contribute to their opportunities and success. Being appreciative and saying thank you to mentors, customers, colleagues, and other stakeholders keeps leaders humble, appreciated, and well received. It also makes you feel great! Donor’s Choose studied the value of a hand-written thank-you note, and actually found donors were 38% more likely to give a second time if they received a hand-written note!

The Golden Rule: Above all else, treat others as you’d like to be treated. By showing others the same courtesy you expect from them, you will gain more respect from co-workers, customers, and business partners. Holding others in high regard demonstrates your company’s likeability and motivates others to work with you. This seems so simple, as do many of these principles — and yet many people, too concerned with making money or getting by, fail to truly adopt these key concepts.

Confident - Humble – Determined When You Will – You Can – Ron ‘Doc’ Halliday. Someone once said that ‘my belief in myself is the source of others belief in me’. Leaders must have conviction and belief in themselves, while understanding that humility in the company of honesty and transparency is the pathway to be supported by the hearts and minds of others.

###