

## Leadership Action Guide

Our mission at Zenie Foundation is to Help Students Become Effective Adults. We describe the key attributes of effective adults at [zeniefoundation.org/values](http://zeniefoundation.org/values). Beyond this, however, we hope that our effective adults will lead others: family, friends, career colleagues and community, to become more effective.

Leaders are often defined as people who control organizational units. What a terrible definition! Being boss doesn't make you a leader nor does the title manager; they do, however, create the expectation of leadership. When discussing leadership, people frequently try to identify the personal characteristics that will make them effective leaders. Don't be fooled; charisma, appearance and good communications skills do not create leaders.

A far better definition is: Leadership is a process of interpersonal influence which motivates others toward achieving a shared goal. You become a leader only when people want to follow you.

### Leadership isn't about control – It's about Ideas & Vision

A potential leader develops a vision describing some future desired condition. Visions create leadership opportunities when people think:

1. That's a worthy idea
2. I'd like to go there
3. How can I help?

If people decide to follow you, you become obligated to lead the way and remain true to the vision. If chosen leader, you must organize and lead the work needed to reach the vision, by:

1. Building a team committed to the vision
2. Seeking and instilling values and culture that build trust

Effective leaders also make good followers. They recognize and respect great ideas and visions and understand the work and obligations of leading. They are motivated by worthy vision and values, not personal ego.

## Vision and Trust Enable Leadership

You can bully peoples' behavior for a while, but you can't bully their minds and will. You can con for a while, but will ultimately be exposed. Long-term leaders are authentic. Organizations lacking a worthy vision can be managed, but not led. Worthy visions energize and motivate people who want to be part of them. Leaders then instill cultural values building trust: it's simple and pragmatic; How you live - Is who you are. Imagine back to June 6, 1944 – the Allied invasion of Europe at Normandy. We landed 150,000 troops from the US, Britain and Canada. The weather stinks, original invasion plans have failed, the generals and admirals are offshore without communications and there are untold Germans shooting at and paralyzing our troops; unprotected on the beach. Some number of very young soldiers recognized that Hitler was evil and that we needed success to begin the end of Nazi Germany. With this vision, they stood up, faced the enemy guns and said to those around them, "Follow Me". Many were gunned down in their first few steps, but the vision prevailed and it was the beginning of the end.

At Zenie Foundation,

Our vision is not some predefined state,  
it's a passion for creating worthy outcomes.

We will become whatever our students need us to be.

We often link our ideas with Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.

<p>Covey's First 5 Habits Zenie Foundation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Be Proactive Vision</li><li>2. Begin with the End in Mind</li></ol> <p>Mission &gt; Vision in Action</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Put First Things First</li><li>4. Think Win/Win</li><li>5. Seek First to Understand ... .. Then be Understood</li></ol>	<p>Always be faithful to your vision, mission and values.</p> <p>Advance with passion and learn from experience. Avoid denial, discover reality and accept or change it.</p> <p>Never forget; our students are our customers.</p>
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Let's close with the powerful example of Martin Luther King. He was assassinated on April 4, 1968, and yet, he still leads. How is this possible? On August 28, 1963, he delivered his most famous speech featuring these ideas:

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends.

And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" -- one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

Dr. King is long gone, but his ideas and vision are clear and still inspire.

Leaders will emerge; lead when appropriate and support worthy Visions and Values.

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