

## Debunking the 'BORN LEADER' Myth

By ATCEN

Have you ever heard a doctor after delivering a baby exclaiming "Nurse, looks like we have another Leader born..." in the operating theater? This, ladies and gentlemen is the myth of the '*natural-born leader*.' Should this be true, just for arguments sake these individuals can have no interaction whatsoever with any external elements and can be in isolation till they are adults can emerge from this experiment and lead a group of people; highly unlikely. Truth of the matter is, some people seem to have had the benefit of the 'right' exposure. But, exposure to what elements?

In an increasingly competitive world, successful businesses need leaders, not managers, to handle the pressure. Even so, an individual can't appoint themselves a leader. Leadership is an honorary title which can be bestowed only by the followers. This goes the same for top management, they can't appoint leaders any more than managers can appoint themselves. The loyalty of those to be led must be earned through successful attitudes and behavior. Those who have been assigned to lead others but lack the skills or motivation to do so will forever remain mere managers.

Effectiveness as a leader is directly proportionate to effectiveness as an influential human being. Above all else, a leader is responsible for getting the best performance possible out of people. Regardless of how many people are involved, the leader is ultimately responsible. Quality of leadership is not determined by the urgency or size of the task to be accomplished. Some of the greatest leaders in business spend much of their time dealing with common details. What makes these people great is how they deal with ordinary details as well as major challenges.

When searching for effective leaders, follow three steps.

1. Identify those who are willing to genuinely accept the challenges and responsibilities of leadership.
2. Identify who the people to be led will respect and willingly follow. It's not a popularity contest, but a nominated leader must be able to earn their respect.
3. Assess the leader's performance in real, non-scientific terms, understanding that people are not machines. Leaders must be merchants of hope.

Many people graduate from school intending to save the world by slaying a fire-breathing dragon. Once they discover how few dragons there are to slay, they must content themselves by campaigning against an occasional lizard. Nevertheless, the great ones fight lizards with tremendous style and vigor.