

## COMMENTARY

## BUSINESS BEAT

## Array of skills builds leadership

By Andrea Testi  
For the Enterprise

Leadership is about more than giving orders to the people who work for you. Leadership is about gaining the trust and respect of your employees, as you inspire them to perform successfully.

Whether you are starting a new business and becoming a boss for the first time, or you've been managing for years and you are looking to improve your leadership skills, there are new things you can learn, and behaviors to work towards.

There are many different styles of leadership, but the fundamental skills that make a good leader are the same. Effective leaders often possess a well-rounded mix of the following key skills:

**Conviction** – It is critical that you believe in yourself and demonstrate passion for the work you do. Show that you know what your goals are and that you know how to achieve them. Your employees will feed off of your confidence and enthusiasm and be inspired by you.

**Vision** – Passion and a great business idea need to be woven into your strategic vision. Plan where you want your business to be and how you are going to take it there. Share this vision with your employees. You will all be more motivated to work toward a common goal if you have shared knowledge of the big picture.



**Communication** – Building trusting and reliable relationships is imperative. You have to listen, observe, encourage input, provide feedback, be open to answering questions; all while making sure to get your message across in a meaningful way. Sharing successes and failures provides your team with context and engages them in the business.

**Delegation** – Know your weaknesses, don't think you are the only one who can do it right, and don't micro manage. Identify the strengths your team has and capitalize on those. Learn how to surround yourself with competent people and you will ease your pressure, improve performance, and motivate employees.

**Flexibility** – Reassess all the time, have the willingness to learn, and solicit feedback. Reflect on what you are doing and consider alternatives.

**Coaching** – Ensure that your employees have the skills to move your business and themselves ahead. Transfer knowledge through mentoring and build your leadership pathways within your business.

**Appreciation** – Positive feedback is a great morale booster and motivates good work. Always say thank you for a job well done. Get creative and make saying thank you a fun activity.

**Earn Respect** – Be honest and

ethical in everything you do. Have strong values, be fair in your dealings, demonstrate competence, and be a good coach.

**Personal Improvement** – You need to continue to improve to ensure that your leadership skills fit the growing needs of your business. Never stop learning because continuous improvement is the key to fine-tuning, flexibility and increased profitability.

**Network** – Connect with other business owners to share experiences and learn from one another. By building these beneficial partnerships you can stay abreast of trends in your industry and maintain professional visibility.

Running a business is a demanding task. Leadership skills are a critical component of your success.

Different leadership styles suit different types of businesses. While leadership qualities may come naturally to some; anyone who wants to put the time and effort into fine tuning leadership skills can significantly improve their potential.

When you know your strengths and weaknesses, you can develop abilities that will make you an effective leader, motivate your employees and promote a strong environment of teamwork.

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## ON THE EDGE OF COMMON SENSE

By Baxter Black, DVM

## Inheriting the family farm can be complicated

The latest statistics show that less than 2% of the population is directly involved in production agriculture. It is a function of an increasing overall population and a limited amount of farm ground. Technology is able to keep up, so that fewer bodies are required to produce an ever-increasing cornucopia of food and fiber.

But on a personal level the story isn't quite so simple.

Tom was raised on a dairy farm in the Great Lake region; 300 cows, 900 acres. His grandfather established the farm and passed it down to Tom's father.

Tom's childhood memories are of work. By the time his mother came in to wake him and his two brothers for school, she and dad had already finished the morning milking. By nine years of age he was already part of the family farm. Until he was old enough to milk he pushed cows to the barn, fed calves, forked silage and did whatever kids do, which was plenty.

High school activities like dances, meetings, sports and girls all hinged around milking time and chores. He didn't need to work at McDonalds during summer vacation. If he wanted work, there was plenty at home.

He went to college. His two brothers left to work elsewhere. Now Tom is 33, married with kids and has a good job at the local Coop. Dad has been using hired labor since the boys left, but Dad is getting older.

Tom makes his rounds, does his job and is active in the community. But hovering over everything he does is that niggling feeling that maybe he should go back to the farm.

After all, it is a showplace – the result of uncountable manhours and love and sweat from two generations preceding him. It made him the good man that he is. And he could run it well if he chose to. Guilt rides him like the winter fog off Lake Michigan.

In my opinion Tom need not feel guilty. Nor should his parents place that onus upon the shoulders of their inheritors. Each person had their own calling.

But I suggest that there are many with no inheritance who would leap at the chance to own a farm. Immigrants, hired men, college grads, feed salesmen and pencil pushin' farm boys whose dream is to work their own place.

It would be ideal if both the parents and their kids could cooperate to actively seek out those potential partners and integrate them into the operation. With the idea they could eventually buy it out. It would be to everyone's relief and good for the continuing productivity of the farm. In other words, take 'em into the family.

To farm you must love the land. That's the only reason I can think of that explains why farming is an occupation where labor is never counted as a business expense.

## STATE NEWS

## Oregon House passes vaccine bill

By Aubrey Wieber  
Salem Reporter

SALEM – Oregon would end nonmedical exemptions to vaccinations required for children under legislation that passed the Oregon House 35-25 on Monday.

House Bill 3063 now goes to the Senate. Gov. Kate Brown is expected to sign it into law if it passes both chambers. While it would not require all children to be fully vaccinated, the bill would force parents to home school or enroll their children in an online school if they refuse to inoculate their children with required vaccines.

The debate on vaccines has been a constant presence at the 2019 Legislature, with hearings bringing out hundreds to testify, confrontations between lawmakers and the opposition, and women lining the Capitol halls with tape over their mouths to signal they have been silenced.

The bill has spurred polemical debate since being introduced. Each hearing has brought hundreds of people in opposition, giving heartfelt testimony about how the change is being pushed by pharmaceutical companies stuffing donations into lawmakers' campaign coffers.

The passion and devotion to return to the Capitol week after week in impressive numbers left an impact on several lawmakers.

House Republican Leader Carl Wilson, R-Grants Pass, said he's never seen such fervor in his six terms.

Like the public, lawmakers also gave impassioned speeches on the House floor Monday before the vote.

Lawmakers didn't focus on whether the science on vaccines is settled, the main argument made by members of the public who've testified. Lawmakers opposing the bill mostly expressed concerns about government overreach.

"I fear a government that says, come on, you have to take your medicine now," Wilson said.

Rep. Cedric Hayden, R-Roseburg, had legislative attorneys analyze the bill and they concluded that children removed from school because they weren't vaccinated wouldn't get free or reduced meals through the National School Lunch Program. They wouldn't be able to play school sports or attend day care. They also might not receive the same level of education.

A legislative attorney found that Oregon's high school graduation rate was 79 percent while the rate for one online school was 65 percent and another's was 26 percent.

Because of 10 measles cases in Oregon in 2019, Hayden said, "We are willing to take away food, we are willing to take away education."

But as of April 22, the Oregon Health Authority found 14 cases of measles, four being connected to an outbreak in Vancouver, Wash., where there have been 71 cases this year. Na-

tionwide, there have been 764 cases. Measles have also become a worldwide issue. The World Health Organization has listed vaccine hesitancy as one of the top 10 threats to global health.

That's in part because skepticism over vaccines is on the rise.

Last week, Oregonians for Medical Freedom, a group opposing mandated vaccinations, sent a cease and desist letter to the Oregon Nurses Association over messaging the group claimed is potentially libelous.

Brad Witt, D-Clatskanie, got loud jeers when he said opponents have been targeted by disinformation campaigns, including one by Russian trolls. The remark got a louder and more sustained response from the gallery anything else during the floor debate.

A study published in the American Journal of Public Health found Russian bots and internet trolls engaged Americans on social media, disseminating false information about vaccines to widen ideological divisions.

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