Introduction

In the broadest sense of the word, a "leader" is someone who brings people together and guides them toward a common goal. Leadership involves working together with employees to achieve results. Anyone can tell others what to do, but effective leadership requires much more than the ability to assign tasks to a group. A leader provides direction, encouragement and inspiration to motivate a team to achieve organizational success.

Leaders set direction and help themselves and others to do the right thing to move forward. To do this they create an inspiring vision, motivating and inspiring others to reach that vision. They also manage delivery of the vision, either directly or indirectly, and build and coach their teams to make them ever stronger.

However, it is not possible to give a study guide on how to become a good leader. Whereas management is quite tangible, leadership can be hard to define and it means different things to different people. There are no absolute truths, or easy answers. Something that works for one leader may not necessarily work for another, depending on the circumstances and personality types of both the leader and the employees.

It is necessary to answer the question

What is good leadership for you, and in your organisation?

However, there are certain principles that many agree on.

Good leaders:
- Have the ability to reflect on own leadership practice
- are active listeners
- have good communication skills
- are good at problem solving
- are good at developing teams
- delegates tasks to employees
- set clear goals
- are good planners
- take decisions
- know own strengths and weaknesses
- know how they affect other people, and how they are affected by others
- inspire and motivate

It can also be useful to think about leadership along the following dimensions:

People leadership – developing staff:
- empowers employees
- builds a team and develops talent
- recognizes and rewards achievements
- supports and provides conditions for individual and team-based learning
- ensures a good and stimulating working environment.

Strategic leadership - Giving direction:
- sets organisational direction and goal
- is forward thinking; being one-step-ahead
- development of new opportunities
• understands and communicate “the big picture” internally
• understands the business, the environment and the external stakeholders

Professional/ academic leadership - Expert role, ensuring professional results:
• understanding of the issues and competencies related to statistical issues
• provide professional sparring and guidance. Ensure continuous improvement
• ensure the professional quality of work, as well as required competencies in the unit
• if necessary, be able to act as the expert worker on core issues

Organizational leadership - Ensuring systems and routines work:
• planning and budgeting
• set timetables, allocate resources
• provides structure and procedures
• follow up on performance
• manage and control production
• economic overview and control

Leadership versus management
Though leadership and management are not the same thing, they are inevitably linked, and complementary. To put it simple: The manager’s job is to plan, organize and coordinate. The leader’s job is to inspire and motivate. But, being a good manager requires leadership skills, and an effective leader will be reliant on applying their own and others’ management skills to achieve their vision.

To think about:
• What is good leadership for you?
• Do you know any good leaders? What characteristics do they have?
• Why should anyone be led by you?
• What are your main priorities as a leader?
• What is the most important achievement you want to accomplish? For the organization as a whole or your unit.
• What attitudes and behaviour do you want to practice for your staff?
• Do you and your staff have the necessary skills and expertise?
• What are the learning and development opportunities in your agency?
• What are you most pleased with? What are you least pleased with?
• What is needed to make the conditions for learning and development even better?