

Here is a series of leadership stories collected from across Scotland.

All stories have been passed on in good faith and the assurance of complete anonymity.

All participants were asked to share what they thought other people would benefit from hearing – not all accounts are about positive reflections. Pearls of wisdom, useful resources and anecdotes have made this collection of stories incisive, interesting and engaging.



As a local authority social service worker, M sees a leader as someone who can help promote positive change. M cited the SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Services Workers and Employers as something which underpins leadership and judgement. She went on to say that not all leaders are managers of people; leadership does not necessarily come from a particular level of management; it is about how you see yourself. She did conclude however that for some people job title was important but that as individuals thinking about leadership, this should not matter, it's about the person.

N is a manager in a third sector organisation; she believes leadership is linked to knowledge, without knowledge it is difficult to present as competent and professional. Key leadership qualities for her are respect, accountability and leading by example.

B is a chief executive of a large international third sector organisation. She states that leadership is not about status, it's a way of being. For any leader, being real is important; losing touch with the people you work for and with will cause a leader to lose their way. Part of B's motivation is the desire to make a difference to large numbers of people; gently guiding is her way of leading others. If compassion is one of the values of an organisation then all staff must behave in a compassionate way; don't become a chief executive if you don't know yourself well. Courage, resilience, vision, emotional intelligence, humility and absolute belief are the key things a leader needs to lead effectively and take people with them. B concluded by saying that it is what you do, not what you say, and leading by example.

V works in an independent sector early years service. Qualifications are important for V, she feels they develop staff and without formal qualifications staff are less informed than their qualified counterparts; she feels staff should know the theory behind what they do. Why is leadership important? V states that "If you've not got leadership it would be like living in a world where people come to work then go home without making a difference; we need guidance."

B works for a large public sector organisation, he believes that unless someone is passionate about their beliefs and the organisational culture, they will not be effective leaders; passion is pivotal to the success of any organisation. Often where there is no shared vision and a top-down structure with 'corporate goals', people do not feel engaged with the organisation. A priority for any leader should be effective communication; there is so much of the why and how that staff could be engaged in, in a very positive way. People buy into the vision if they can see the connection between the vision and the work they do; all employees should be able to make the link between the corporate plan and the day to day business of the organisation. Management = practical prosaic priorities, delegating and undertaking tasks. Leadership = inspiring people to carry out their jobs and to develop in a way that will benefit the individual and the organisation. A great leader has to be relentless in the pursuit of effective communication, without this an organisation will not meet its potential; the process has to work.

