

# Leadership Lessons Learned

Barbara Gellman-Danley, Ph.D., President, HLC

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- Lead with integrity, ethics, and authenticity.
- Hire employees that demonstrate their own integrity and ethics. Loyalty is a must.
- Surround yourself with respected mentors and coaches.
- Demonstrate social and emotional intelligence. Be empathetic to others. They have feelings and life outside work.
- Remember that a leader sets the example and has great influence over the emotional well-being of an organization. If you panic, so too will your co-workers and staff.
- Never leave any “dead bodies” in your wake. Do not gain at cost of others. If you do, it is likely that behavior will not only reflect poorly on you, but you will ultimately become the victim.
- Communicate openly with colleagues and staff. Be cautious about favoritism. You will certainly have individuals with stronger assets for the organization. Your job is to treat everyone fairly and with equal respect. Become an active listener.
- If things get really tough, take a mental health day or vacation. Leaders should not bring their angst into the office.
- Find a few individuals in whom you have trust and invite them to be your confidantes. You do not have to walk this journey alone.
- Celebrate successes along the way – yours and others.
- Create an atmosphere for achievement –then get out of people’s way so they can make great things happen.
- Do not bury any problems by looking away; it’s always better to bring them to the surface for collective responses and improvement.
- Set boundaries about teamwork, decision-making and final authority. When a leader loses control, the organization is weakened, and credibility is compromised.
- Do not be naïve about the political aspects of your organization, or those that are external to it. No successful leader operates in isolation. Read Machiavelli’s, *The Prince* and Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*.
- Gather evidence and data before reaching conclusions. Make few assumptions; talk with those with whom you have concerns before you rush to judgment.
- Humor in the workplace lightens the atmosphere and serves as an emotional medicine.
- Everyone has leadership potential, and leadership is not bound by position or titles.
- Find a healthy work-life balance.
- Never stop learning. Set the example for your staff as a lifelong learner.
- Be willing to be wrong and allow both risk and failure. Always be self-aware about lessons learned from these experiences.
- You can have it all; it’s just a matter of how you define “all.”
- Follow your heart.