

20 Habits of Unsuccessful and Ineffective Leaders (Infographic)

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By Gordon Tredgold Gordon Tredgold is a former business and IT transformation expert who has successfully delivered \$100 million programs, run \$300 million departments, and led teams of 1000 staff for Fortune 100 companies. Now, he is... Full bio @ [gordontredgold](#) Founder and CEO, Leadership Principles @ [gordontredgold](#)

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A few weeks ago I wrote an article which focused on the [bad habits of leaders](#) which should be avoided, as I thought this was just as important as modeling ourselves on the best. Due to the popularity of this article I produced an [Infographic](#), using [Visme](#), that you can download and share.

The article was based on my 25 years of experience in leaderships, highlighting some of the [habits of unsuccessful and ineffectual leaders](#) that I have seen, and in some cases, their justification for having them.

These are habits best avoided, if possible!

1. Believe They have All The Answers

They know that the reason that they have been put in charge is that they are smarter and better than everyone else. So when it comes to deciding strategy, solving problems, or resolving issues, there is no need, or point in involving anyone else.

2. React, Don't Respond

Driven by their emotions, they react quickly to situations [without worrying about facts](#) or the repercussions of their actions.

They can always show good emotional intelligence by apologizing later.

3. Take Big Risks, The Bigger The Better

They like to gamble and take big risks. Believing in the adage "Nothing Ventured Nothing Gained" and that Smart Risk taking is for wimps.

When I questioned a decision that one boss was taking his response was, "that's not your concern I get paid big bucks to take the big risks and make the tough calls."

Personally, I thought he got paid the big bucks to take the right risks and to be successful, but what did I know.

4. Believe That Talking About It and Doing It Are The Same Thing

I always remember the first boss I worked for, when the CEO asked him how it was going, he said: "It's going great, we have been discussing the problem for two days now." The only problem was that was two days that the business couldn't operate, and we were no closer to finding a solution.

5. Focus On Blame Not Solutions

It's better to know who's fault it is so that we can fire them and make sure this doesn't happen again.

6. Believe Their Own PR

There is a big difference between confidence and arrogance; the former helps build trust in the leader, the latter destroys it. As soon as you start to believe your own PR, then you are leaning more towards arrogance and starting down a path that is going to end in tears.

7. Don't Waste Valuable Time on Planning And Preparation

Sometimes you just have to dive and get it done. Don't worry about what's involved, or whether you're focused on the symptom or root cause, just do it. My favorite comment was "we can afford to spend time and money on planning; we just need to get started".

Which was interesting because we found the time and money to do it again correctly, after that first attempt failed badly.

8. Hire People Beneath Them

As a leader, it is critical that you are the most skillful and knowledgeable member of the team, that way everyone can focus on their job rather than working out how they could replace you.

I worked at one company where the boss told me that he liked to recruit from the bottom quartile because it kept the costs down. He then added, "the only problem with that was the results sucked."

9. Focus Instant success

It's all about results, and if we find that they are not coming, then we need to move quickly on to another topic.

They believe that a lot of short-term success will lead to long-term success.

10. Focus On The Big Picture, Not The Details

Don't worry about the details, focus on the big picture, as that will keep you motivated. We all know the devil is in the details, but that could lead to concerns, a lack of belief and even worse de-motivation.

11. Focus on Weaknesses Not Strengths

As leaders we cannot have or show any weaknesses, so we need to work on eliminating them, or failing that, hiding them.

12. Confuse Stubbornness With Determination

"Winners never quit, and quitters never win" is a great approach to achieving results.

However you're bordering on stubbornness if your approach is failing but you refuse to change it.

13. Don't Play Well With Others

It's hard to play well with others when you adopt a command and control approach to leadership. People like to be led not managed.

14. Think Praise is For Wimps

It's ok to praise people once we have achieved success, but praising people just to keep them happy is not a good approach to building a strong, resilient team. We've got to be mean to keep them keen, and praising people too often makes a team soft.

15. Take Don't Give

The more we take, the more we have, that's how winners are made.

It's a dog eat dog world, and we have to fight for our share.

16. Quick to Criticize

If you want people to improve, you need to point out their mistakes quickly and clearly. It's also best to do this publicly so that others can learn too.

17. Easily Distracted

Never content with their current goals they are constantly looking for the next big thing that they get involved in. I think the reason for this is it's much easier to start something new than to finish something important.

18. Make Excuses

There are a million and one reasons why things don't work out as planned, so it's not always our fault, and we need to remember that so as we don't become too de-motivated. One boss told me never ever accept responsibility it could be career limiting, always have someone ready to blame or a good excuse handy.

19. Love To Micro Manage

It's hard to trust everyone, so by micro-managing your staff, you can keep a close eye on things, and look to offer advice or step in if things start to go wrong.

20. Practice Inconsistently

It's great to be inconsistent because it keeps your team guessing, which in turn keeps them on their toes. Predictability, on the other hand, can lead to complacency.





Confidence builds trust,
arrogance destroys it.

8

HIRE PEOPLE BENEATH THEM

They believe smart
people are a threat!



VALUABLE TIME ON PLANNING AND PREPARATION

It's action we
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11

FOCUS ON WEAKNESSES NOT STRENGTHS



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FOCUS INSTANT SUCCESS

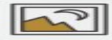
If at first, you don't succeed
then try something else!



9

FOCUS ON THE BIG PICTURE, NOT THE DETAILS

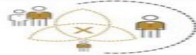
If you avoid the detail, then you
avoid the devil in the detail.



10

12

CONFUSE STUBBORNNESS WITH DETERMINATION



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THINK PRAISE IS FOR WIMPS

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TAKE DON'T GIVE

The more we take, the
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QUICK TO CRITICIZE

If you want people to
improve, you need to point
out their mistakes quickly,
clearly and loudly.



17

EASILY DISTRACTED

Look a squirrel!



MAKE EXCUSES

It was the previous
manager's fault!



18

19

LOVE TO MICRO MANAGE



PRACTICE INCONSISTENTLY

Predictability is boring.



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This infographic is based on "20 Habits of
Highly Unsuccessful and Ineffective Leaders"
by Gordon Tredgold

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