

**TIP #23 – NOVEMBER 2007**  
**THE FIVE PRACTICES OF EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP®:**  
**A WAY OF FACILITATING**  
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The most effective facilitators of the Leadership Challenge® Workshop are those that live The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership®—day in and day out—and are able to talk about them from personal life experiences. I have watched and worked with many facilitators. Some have lived The Five Practices and taught from their experience while others have facilitated the workshop and treated it like just another training curriculum. The difference shows!

Teaching The Five Practices in a meaningful way requires a commitment: make the time to fully understand and live each of them within the context of your own life so that you can facilitate from a place of authenticity.

**Redefine your own life experiences within the context of The Five Practices.**

I often tell clients that The Five Practices are common sense—articulated. All of us have used The Five Practices at one point or another, but we often only reach a full understanding of what they mean and how they impact our everyday lives when we stop to reflect and reframe some of our experiences as leaders. So, call upon your own experiences. Compelling, personal stories make a big difference when facilitating and helping others develop their leadership competencies.

**Seek complete 360 Feedback.**

The Leadership Challenge is about changing lives at work *and* home. As a facilitator, I highly recommend that you challenge participants to incorporate the way they lead at home into their leadership self-assessment. Encourage participants to reflect on their leadership behaviors in all aspects of their lives.

Although an in-depth discussion of family life leadership in the workshop isn't necessary, the topic should not be ignored. Prior to the workshop, I recommend that participants ask for feedback on their LPI 360 from their family. Some of the most vibrant and powerful experiences using The Five Practices can come from these interactions.

**Know the content in the book.**

The Leadership Challenge® Workshop facilitators need to be expertly fluent in *The Leadership Challenge*. There is no substitute for taking the time to have a complete working knowledge of the book's content. Expert facilitators are able to weave in and out of The Five Practices as the needs of participants change. And the ability to respond quickly and nimbly to your audience only comes from having a solid, personal connection to the material. This takes time and focus.

**Facilitate don't train.**

The Five Practices are incredibly meaningful and have the power to change lives—but only if you build into your workshop an opportunity for a robust dialogue among participants on how they can apply each of them to their own life experiences. Engage participants in discussing the various subtleties and nuances that can bring out the true power of The Five Practices. When participants can place these principles in the context of a specific life experience, they are more likely to carry the practices with them when the workshop has ended.

**Help participants connect a feeling to The Five Practices.**

It can be easy to leave participants with a 30,000-mile, sky-high understanding of The Five Practices. A technique I have used to bring The Five Practices down-to-earth is offered in the following example. The goal is to help participants identify the *feeling* of each behavior associated with the respective practice—making the practice and the behavior personal and relevant.

Referring to item 16 (*Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect other people's performance*) from the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), ask participants to reflect on their life experiences and identify times when they used a behavior associated with one of The Five Practices. Ask them to link that behavior to a feeling and to identify actions they can take in the future that will illicit the same emotion. By focusing on the feeling associated with the leadership behavior, participants can more effectively connect to the practice.

Note: An underlying assumption for employing the Model the Way exercise is that workshop participants are familiar with the thirty behaviors Kouzes and Posner identify in *The Leadership Challenge* and have used each of them at one point in their lives. Also be aware that some participants may have had a negative experience using one of The Five Practices. If a participant has a difficult time with this exercise, I might use item 14 (*Treats others with dignity and respect*).

**Example: Model the Way**

Ask workshop participants to consider the following:

1. *Reflect on a time in your life when you asked for feedback on how your actions affected someone else's performance.*
2. *What were the feelings you experienced? Were you nervous? Were you at ease? Were you unsure? Zero in on your exact feeling.*
3. *Describe the setting in which this situation occurred.*

Once participants have identified the experience and their feelings, have them think about an upcoming project where they will have an opportunity to demonstrate leadership. Help them translate their newly-acquired knowledge into specific action steps that they can take to apply this learning to a new situation.

4. *How can you create the same experience as you described above?*
5. *What are the actions you can take in that situation to illicit the same feeling you had in the experience you just described?*

This process of reflection can help participants connect their lives to The Five Practices. It is also a valuable tool to reinforce learning after the workshop and help encourage participants to continue practicing the art of leadership.