

# The 5 Practices of Exemplary Leaders

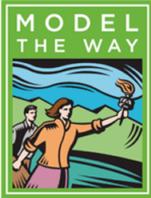
As part of the AgForestry curriculum, your mentee is studying, using, and receiving peer feedback around these The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership®, as presented by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner in their book *The Leadership Challenge*. Here we have provided an overview of the 5 practices to help you familiarize yourself with the language and concepts that you will hear your mentee talking about. Throughout the year, we will be hosting webinars about each of these practices. Mentors are invited to attend all of the class's webinars.



Leadership is not about personality; it's about behavior—an observable set of skills and abilities. And when we first set out to discover what great leaders actually do when they are at their personal best, we collected thousands of stories from ordinary people—the experiences they recalled when asked to think of a peak leadership experience. Despite differences in culture, gender, age, and other variables, these “Personal Best” stories revealed similar patterns of behavior. In fact, we discovered that when leaders are at their personal best there are five core practices common to all: they Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and last but certainly not least, they Encourage the Heart.

Three decades later, The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership® model continues to prove its effectiveness as a clear, evidence-based path to achieving the extraordinary—for individuals, teams, organizations, and communities. It turns the abstract concept of leadership into easy-to-grasp practices and behaviors that can be taught and learned by anyone willing to step up and accept the challenge to lead. As measured and validated by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)—one of the most widely used leadership assessment instruments in the world—ongoing studies consistently confirm that The Five Practices and our assessment tools are positively related to both the effectiveness of leaders and the level of commitment, engagement, and satisfaction of those that follow.

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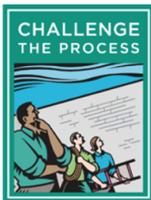
## MODEL THE WAY

Leaders establish principles concerning the way people (constituents, peers, colleagues, and customers alike) should be treated and the way goals should be pursued. They create standards of excellence and then set an example for others to follow. Because the prospect of complex change can overwhelm people and stifle action, they set interim goals so that people can achieve small wins as they work toward larger objectives. They unravel bureaucracy when it impedes action; they put up signposts when people are unsure of where to go or how to get there; and they create opportunities for victory.



## INSPIRE A SHARED VISION

Leaders passionately believe that they can make a difference. They envision the future, creating an ideal and unique image of what the organization can become. Through their magnetism and quiet persuasion, leaders enlist others in their dreams. They breathe life into their visions and get people to see exciting possibilities for the future.



## CHALLENGE THE PROCESS

Leaders search for opportunities to change the status quo. They look for innovative ways to improve the organization. In doing so, they experiment and take risks. And because leaders know that risk taking involves mistakes and failures, they accept the inevitable disappointments as learning opportunities.



## ENABLE OTHERS TO ACT

Leaders foster collaboration and build spirited teams. They actively involve others. Leaders understand that mutual respect is what sustains extraordinary efforts; they strive to create an atmosphere of trust and human dignity. They strengthen others, making each person feel capable and powerful.



## ENCOURAGE THE HEART

Accomplishing extraordinary things in organizations is hard work. To keep hope and determination alive, leaders recognize contributions that individuals make. In every winning team, the members need to share in the rewards of their efforts, so leaders celebrate accomplishments. They make people feel like heroes.