

## Creating the Leader Within

by Erna Kriigel

When most people think about leadership, an image of a person occupying positional leadership emerges. Usually a picture of their boss towering over them comes to mind and often thoughts on leadership immediately center on “Who is in charge around this place!” Leadership authority may be granted and authorized by organizations and institutions. A variety of challenges require decisions to be made by people with a specific knowledge and experience base. For example, when I go to the doctor’s office I want a competent medical professional to determine how to treat my case.

Positional leadership is only ONE approach to leadership. There are other ways to consider leadership and what it means to be a leader. Stephan Covey in his book, *The 8<sup>th</sup> Habit*, provides an explanation of leadership. “Simply put - at its most elemental and practical level - leadership is communicating to people their worth and potential so clearly that they come to see it in themselves.” His definition of leadership gets to the heart of change: helping people to believe that they are capable of change. This is a role for leadership coaches.

Leaders are people who can make personal adjustments and adaptations in their own life and in the lives of others in order to improve human and organizational conditions. Leaders are people who are at point A and want to go to point B and summon up the courage and resources to get there. Everyone is capable of becoming a leader in the circles of influence which they occupy whether that is the home, school, church, business, government or non-profit sector. Positional authority is not a prerequisite for one to act as a leader.

### Leadership and Coaching

As a leadership and life coach, I believe in the capacity and potential of people to succeed in those things that are significant to them. At Stepping Stones Coach we help our clients become leaders: personal and proactive change agents in areas that are significant and meaningful in their lives.

Leaders know who they are at their core and what they value. They understand their life purpose. They have learned to express what they stand for through positive action. Leaders are intentional about defining their current reality, and using an action plan to move forward. Well known leadership guru, Max DePree, says “The first step of a leader is to define reality.”

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