

LEADERSHIP

A checklist for bringing out the best

Leadership is what brings out the best in people: enthusiasm, courage, initiative, trust, loyalty, imagination... You can make your own list. But it can also bring out the worst in people: despair, fear, apathy, suspicion, blame, powerlessness... This is a checklist for bringing out the best.

*Text Tim Casswell, Vice President of the UIA and Director of CreativeConnection
(www.creativeconnection.co.uk)*

L is for **Listening**. If we stop and remember times in our lives when we became really inspired, involved and committed and not just compliant... a time when we really loved what we were doing... it will almost certainly be when someone listened to us. When leaders listen to the ideas, intuitions, imagination, and initiative of people it brings out the best in them. Great leaders do this. Great associations do this in our society. Listening is transformative.

and are sustained. True association is, of course, about listening. Recollect the times when you were pleased to be associated with a cause, an organisation or a person. It was when you felt your voice was heard. And making associations is the process we go through in making links between ideas, and therefore conceiving new thoughts.

D is for **Decision-making**. The important part of that word is **making**. It is the gathering of

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E is for **Engagement**. Great leaders engage people. Stop for a moment and think of a time in your life when you performed to the best of your ability... Wasn't it a time when you were entrusted, encouraged and appreciated? Associations themselves exist as a means of expression and courage. Associations are the means of true engagement in our societies.

people together; gathering of information; gathering of hearts and minds and it is an art. It has the same daring as artists need to make their work. Leaders who have the true art of enabling the making of decisions will have the reward of profoundly committed people who will give everything to see the decision realised, because it was their decision... it all comes back again to listening.

A is naturally for **Association** in all its meanings: connections, links, partnerships, networks. Great leaders are hubs in the network of activity. Associations are the hubs of civil society - places where relationships grow

E is for **Extraordinary**. Great leadership looks for and finds amazing qualities in people and extraordinary challenges to take on. People don't join associations to do something ordinary. A great leader dares to



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dream the extraordinary, something as yet unseen, something considered impossible, and so provides an invitation for others to dream too. This is one of the key functions of civil society to encourage people to believe the extraordinary is possible. It is the mark of great international and grassroots political leaders too.

R is for **Recognition**. Radical **remembering** of reality. Leaders **see** that the change they want **has** happened and then they live in that new reality. They don't only have a dream, they **see** the dream in the hearts and minds of the people, they see the dream as reality. The status quo "normal" is revealed as weird and ridiculous.

S is for **Story**. This re-cognition becomes the leader's story - their understanding of the situation and what it demands, a dream of what is actually true. They inhabit that dream because it is their reality. The telling of this story invites people to be their part in a **legend in the making**. Recognising this changes everything.

H is for **Humility**. Being part of a legend in the making can tempt people to self righteousness, pride and arrogance. Nothing of any importance is solved finally and forever. Any battle truly worth fighting can never be won finally and forever. Humility allows for vigilant curiosity, imagination and an authentic desire to listen to the ideas and dreams of others. Arrogance can appear to be confidence but it usually masks insecurity. Humility is the only authentic position in the face of complexity. Great leaders acknowledge their insecurity, uncertainty, and ignorance and therefore their genuine need to listen to people around them.

I is for **Invitation**. Whenever you ask people how they first became involved in anything they almost always point to a particular point when they were specifically invited to become involved. We often forget that the most powerful way to enlist support and commitment is to ask someone in a way that recognises **their** qualities rather than

promoting the qualities of the association or the worthiness of the cause.

P is for **Power**. True power is exercised when it is entrusted in others by leaders who encourage others to have and exercise power. Those who recognise the power of the passion and commitment of those around them are those with true power. International Associations provide a platform for ordinary people to discover, explore and exercise power. True Civil Society is the expression of the power of the people. Listen. Can you hear it?

For over a hundred years the UIA has rigorously collected and collated the story of this extraordinary expression of leadership. You can see the results in our *Yearbook of International Associations* and the *Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential*. We will be listening for where you take the story now.



WHAT'S THE UNION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS (UIA)?

The Union of International Associations - UIA - is a non-profit, independent, apolitical, and non-governmental institution in the service of international associations.

Since its foundation in 1907, the UIA is a leading provider of information about international non-profit organisations and a premium networking platform between international organisations and the meeting industry worldwide.

Main activities:

- Yearbook of International Organisations - contains information on over 64,000 international organisations active in all fields of human endeavour, in all corners of the world, and over centuries of history. Available online and in book form.
- International Congress Calendar - with information on over 350,000 international meetings. Available online, in pdf, and on paper.
- Annual Associations Round Table - features both open-space / networking and discussion oriented sessions as well as practical skills training sessions for associations. See www.uia.org/roundtable

Who can use the UIA's research and networking platform? Everyone with an interest in international associations and cooperation: international associations, the businesses which provide services to them, media and press, research centres, universities, libraries, government offices. Associate Members have quick access to first quality material to benefit their business. To join, see <http://www.uia.be/associate-members>.

For more information, please contact uia@uia.org