



Leadership Series: Dr. Kiran Bedi

Why leadership is essentially upward spiraling.

3 min read

Nov 22, 2019

Even with all the experiences, no one can ever know everything about leadership. It is also a highly dynamic process that constantly revolves around the same nuances. Sounds like a lot of paradoxes, but it is perfectly normal — and necessary for a successful leader to embrace.

I had the honor of speaking to Dr. Kiran Bedi who dedicated decades of her life to projects in reformative and creative police and prison

management [#DoingTimeDoingVipassana](#) -, as well as female empowerment, accessible education, healthcare, environment, and many other spheres. While discussing leadership, Dr. Bedi pointed out a major idea: growing as a leader is very much like spiraling up. It starts with a single point — yourself — in the center, and there can only be progress through both change and repetition.

Consider — per default people cannot lead with nobody to follow them, nobody to be guided and nobody to be supported. But one's first follower that is always around is themselves. It's an everyday practice, says Dr. Bedi, to lead yourself before others towards what you believe in, what you would like to see in others, what you want to share. This inward focus will eventually take a gravitational effect on others — seeing your sense of direction in practice, they will want to get to know you and your secret.

As egocentric as this may sound, a leader remains the centerpiece of this model. This does not in the least imply ultimate authority; instead, it reminds leaders of their obligations towards people they work with and themselves.

On the one hand, a leader always evolves or goes up the spiral as a facilitator. That means never-ending learning — either through research and observations before engaging in a project or regularly allowing others to lead you and see how they work. Sometimes it also means giving up some control to those whom you lead — after all, even being a leader, you may not know their field and struggles as well as they do. It is also a good way to see how tangible the results of your leadership are.

On the other hand, moving up the spiral, one inevitably crosses the same “axes” or “coordinates” from time to time. In leadership, these are routines, principles or practices that should not be abandoned with progress. I already mentioned a couple — the inward leadership and learning. Dr. Bedi suggests thorough preparation, transparency and integrity. By assuming these, you won't only deliver without meandering but also leave no doubt that you put yourself to the task at 100% and build consistent reputation.

Want to share your leadership success story or feeling ready to make your own?

Get in touch!

Yours gratefully

Gerald



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