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The Primary Colors of Great Leaders

By Ron Price



Every leader has strengths and weaknesses—and understands them both. A critical attribute for optimizing leadership opportunities is to be clear about what you do well, what you don’t do well, and to have the courage and humility to organize your efforts accordingly.

There are three “primary colors” in leadership—these three core skills make up the complete palette of leadership capabilities. They are thinking skills, striving skills and relating skills. Every decision, every action, every relationship in leadership is built on a blending of these primary skills.

No leader is equally talented or skilled in all three areas. Some leaders are brilliant strategists (thinking skills) but they struggle with building strong relationships that endure over time. Other leaders are terrific achievers (striving skills) but they spend more time working “in” the business than “on” the business. Still other leaders are very

effective in building networks in the community (relating skills) but they struggle to maintain a simple, dynamic focus for their business. Each of us has a unique blend of these primary leadership skills and this blend creates specific strengths and weaknesses in the way we lead.

Do you have a clear picture of what your greatest leadership skills are? Do you understand your weaknesses? The great leaders don’t spend time trying to turn a weakness into a strength—instead, they do what is necessary to minimize the weakness and then look to others to provide strength in this area, whether it be employees, co-leaders, or external advisors. Great leaders recognize that their primary focus should be on expanding, developing, and leveraging their strengths while using the help of others to neutralize their weaknesses. This is a simple idea that often produces a powerful result. ■