

THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD

GOAL: To present a known idiom that encourages positive leadership skills

“FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD!” – These are memorable musical words from The Wizard of Oz as Dorothy traveled the Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City. In the realm of idioms (words/story that cannot be understood from their exact words) the “Yellow Brick Road” signifies a path toward the pursuit of happiness, prosperity, and wealth (maybe “yellow” signifying gold), and the words “Emerald City” signifies the vitality from growth, harmony, and emotional balance. Apply that known road to the Emerald City as it relates to the leader’s compliance with known application of these proven leadership behaviors and common sense, and you are on the road to organizational leadership success.

INTELLECTUAL LEADERSHIP CONFORMANCE VERSUS LEADERSHIP ANTI-INTELLECTUAL RESISTANCE & NONCOMPLIANCE:

The Intellectual Leadership Conformance process is characterized by displaying overall positive leadership knowledge, critical thinking, inspiration, and common sense resulting in overall organizational success—often including organizational monetary intake (as per the idiom of The Yellow Brick Road). The outcome of the process is personal leadership pride, growth, harmony, and emotional balance (as per the idiom of reaching the Emerald City). Through this accomplishment, there is an overwhelming result of personal satisfaction and professional RESPECT as a leader.

Conversely, the Intellectual Leadership Performance Resistance & Noncompliance process is characterized by a supposed leader displaying overall negativity and a lack of leadership knowledge, critical thinking, inspiration, and common sense ---often resulting in organizational monetary loss (as per the negative idiom representation of The Yellow Brick Road). The outcome of the process is personal leadership demise, disharmony, frustration, and confusion (contrary to the representation of the Emerald

City's growth, harmony, and emotional balance.) There is a tendency to seek a more passive-aggressive or contrary approach to *already known* methods of successful leadership, either by choice or habitual non-conformance. As a result of the lack of accomplishment, there is personal dissatisfaction and lack of professional RESPECT as a leader.

INTELLECTUAL LEADERSHIP CONFORMANCE PROCESS:

(not intended to be listed in a sequence of importance)

- Incorporates already known, proven ideas, information, or norms of proven leadership success
- Offers constructive ideas to improve systems and enhance understanding
- Accepts known community/governmental/academic power structures, norms, rules, and regulations proven to be collectively successful
- Discourages disruptive behaviors while encouraging improved behaviors with positive outcomes
- Seeks accountability for perceived non-compliance with expected rules, laws, and performance expectations
- Documents decisions related to rules, laws, and goals
- Seeks to understand the stated leadership conforming and nonconforming behaviors of other leaders
- Demonstrates that the word/promise as a leader is as binding as a written contract
- Recognizes human frailties yet kindly corrects or supports with kindness
- Listens carefully to the words of others yet tries to understand the actual meaning of the words
- Shows smartness and intellect in personal abilities/skills
- Performs personal job-related skills with precision and accuracy
- Exhibits an attitude of caring and mutual respect for others
- Presents forthrightness and honesty in dealing with others
- Presents a "listening ear" to the concerns, wishes, and needs of others
- Shows accountable and responsible behavior when making decisions that affects the lives of others

- Employs (when possible) qualified employees who live in the same community.
- Keeps verbal commitments as you would legal obligations.
- States clearly and places in writing (as a signed and dated document) the requirements for successful organizational behavior(s)--a job description. It includes what is expected intellectually to be *known*, what is expected to be *done/performed*, and the *attitude* in which all performance is to occur.
- Performs according to a personal leadership job description.
- Maintains a personal, accurate, and informative record/diary of leadership subjective thoughts, goals, plans, outcomes, and decisions.
- Listens and appropriately responds to customers/constituents/employees regarding their concerns, problems, and suggestions.
- Converses effectively with others who ask for or need attention, direction, or special consideration.
- Recognizes aberrance and covert frustration.
- Presents calmness in the face of anxiety and misbehavior.
- Presents positive reinforcement (verbal and written) when exceptional positive behavior(s) occurs. A “Thank You” is always appreciated!
- Learns characteristics of employees by covert means—watching, listening, behavior(s), and especially their coping abilities under crisis.
- Establishes written protocols and appropriate updated rules, laws, and regulations -- as there are universal changes that occur occasionally in all things.
- Holds all employees accountable to pre-established regulations, expectations, and requirements as appropriate.
- Considers board members’ written recommendation(s) as an Organizational Leader.
- Makes all Organizational Leader decisions according to the documented purpose, mission, philosophy, long-term goals, short-term objectives, and any other previously established regulations.
- Hires appropriate personnel with experience in the position to be performed. If unable to locate such a person, be responsible for teaching expected behaviors per a documented and employee-signed job description.

- Maintains consistency with meeting agreed-upon employee expectations.
- Shows up unexpectedly to determine compliance with job expectation(s)/job description(s).
- Writes job evaluations/expectations regularly reflecting the degree of compliance with job description(s).
- Requires individuals with job descriptions/expectations to do job description self-evaluations.
- Determines continued employment, promotion, and appropriate reimbursement.
- Presents personal trustworthiness and a trusting demeanor toward others.

Logical and positive outcomes that meet the organizational standards (including the documented organization's title, mission/purpose, philosophy, long-term goals, and short-term objectives) provide the magic of organizational success allowing the organization to reach "The Emerald City".

IN CLOSING:

To be recognized as an effective Organizational Leader, the leader must perform within the parameters of Leadership Conformance---such as the idioms indicate---the successful leading of others down the Yellow Brick Road toward Emerald City.

Even the smallest insignificant detail of positive Organizational Leadership Conformance exposes the degree of intellectual goodness of the human soul. The commendable outcome of Leadership Conformance is known as Organizational Leader RESPECT.

Carolyn Taylor, Ed.D. M.N. R.N.

Author of a published book for teaching nurses to be leaders entitled: NURSE POWER

Author's online website containing numerous available leadership articles:
leadershippoweronline.com