

“Leadership” is such a nebulous term. It’s part action, part mindset. Some think leaders are born, others, like me, believe leadership can be taught. While I think leadership *can* be taught, I concede that it’s not an easy or fast process.

I liken it to teaching your baby manners. When do you start to teach your baby manners? When they are pre-verbal, right? You say, “Wave goodbye to Grandma,” and “Say thank you,” when someone hands them a cookie or a toy. They have no idea what you are saying, but you keep instilling the correct behavior and responses until, hopefully, 10 or 12 years down the road some other adult says, “Your child is so polite!”

I believe this is how we need to teach leadership as well. Start teaching what “leadership” looks like and sounds like early, be consistent, and after a period of practice and reinforcement the behavior becomes second nature.

So how do we teach leadership behaviors and mindset? Here are some ideas.

Leadership is a Behavior

We often refer to leadership skills, but leadership really is a behavior. And it’s hard to train for a behavior.

For instance, I might be able to train you to read a profit and loss statement - which most leaders are required to do - but I cannot train you to be fiscally responsible - at least not in a class. Teaching someone how to be fiscally responsible would

Read and discuss. Many forward-looking organizations are reading an article a week or a book a month that touch on leadership concepts and then discussing what those concepts mean in their own organization. What does trust in the workplace look like? Is AI a fad or a non-negotiable?

Discuss some more. Discussion is a wonderful learning tool. It helps us to realize that not everyone thinks the way we do or values the things that we do. We help organizations to develop leadership behaviors by facilitating peer learning groups. These are cross-discipline groups that meet regularly to discuss concepts such as identify unconscious bias, mitigating burnout, or developing, using, and giving away power behaviors.

About the Author

Dr. Nanette Miner is a leadership development and workplace-learning strategy consultant. Through her firm, [The Training Doctor](#), she has revolutionized the way that individuals are prepared for leadership roles in their organizations. Rather than a chosen few, her process is aimed at ensuring everyone in the company has the skills and business acumen of a leader. This approach ensures both immediate and long-term return-on-investment (ROI) for an organization.

She has written articles for Chief Learning Officer magazine, R