

Teddy's Tips on Leadership

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

Theodore Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt lived the strenuous life. He was always on the go. Many remember him as the Rough Rider during the Spanish-American War and the 26th President of the United States.

Few remember he served in the New York State Assembly, first elected at the age of 22. Few remember his first wife Alice dying two days after giving birth, in the same house where his mother died ten hours earlier. Few remember his failed attempt as a rancher in the Dakota territories. Few remember his failed run for Mayor of New York City at the age of 28. Few remember his six years as Civil Service Commissioner, or his three years as President of the NYC Police Board, or his two years as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. He also served a two-year term as Governor of New York. And Teddy is the youngest man ever to serve as President – he was 42 when he took office in 1901.

In addition, he authored 38 books, re-married and raised six children, and conducted scientific research and collected specimens for the Smithsonian in Africa and South America.

Teddy always put his entire self into whatever he endeavored. He never sought out higher office – his success came to him through hard work and perseverance. He often said, *“Success, the real success, does not depend upon the position you hold but upon how you carry yourself in that position.”*

Teddy was also a risk-taker, although he didn't just jump into situations. He was always fully prepared when tackling something new. And he was very adept at dealing with unforeseen circumstances. He was a planner. He always looked ahead. As President, he purchased what would later be developed into the naval base in Pearl Harbor. He anticipated trouble with Japan forty years before the attack in 1941, and wanted to protect the west coast of the United States.

Among new ground broken as President, Teddy was the first President to:

- Own and drive an automobile.
- Dive underwater in a submarine.
- Travel outside the US as President.
- Fly in an aeroplane.

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- Win a Nobel Prize (Nobel Peace Prize).
- Have telephones installed at his home.
- Invite an African-American to dinner at the White House (Booker T. Washington).

How do you approach your life and career?

- Do you give it your all in each of your endeavors?
- Do you adopt new technologies?
- Do you read and study a wide variety of subjects? (Teddy read an average of a book a day throughout his adult lifetime.)
- Do you take the time for the personal touch in your dealings with others? (Teddy stayed in touch with hundreds of others throughout his lifetime with personal letters.)
- Do others see you as a leader, or a follower? (Teddy was always drafted or recommended for each position he held. He also did some subtle and oftentimes not so subtle politicking for certain positions.)
- Do you take the time to nurture your family life? (While President, Teddy would often stop work at four o'clock to play with the children until dinnertime. After dinner he would read and/or write.)
- Do you surround yourself with competent colleagues and friends, ready to help you with projects and problems?
- Do you take the time to reflect and think before making critical decisions?
- Do you have the courage to stand up to those who oppose you?

Two months before he died, Teddy was admitted to the hospital for treatment of inflammatory rheumatism. He remained in the hospital for six weeks. There was nothing more the doctors could do. He would have to spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair. "All

right!" he said, "I can work and live that way, too."

While still in the hospital he said to his sister Corinne, "Well, anyway, no matter what comes, I have kept the promise that I made to myself when I was twenty-one. I promised myself," he said, bringing his fist down on the arm of the chair, "that I would work up to the hilt until I was sixty, and I have done it. I have kept my promise." A couple of weeks later, he died in his sleep. He lived a full life. He crammed several lifetimes of experiences into his sixty years.

Teddy Roosevelt was indeed an extraordinary human being.

But we are all extraordinary in some aspect of our being.

- Are you doing all you can to exploit your genius?
- Are you living your life to the fullest, *up to the hilt*?
- Are you living *a strenuous life*?
- Do you strive valiantly to pursue your goals?
- Does your face sometimes become marred by dust and sweat and blood?
- Do you spend yourself in worthy causes?
- Do you know the great enthusiasms and the great devotions of the triumph of high achievement?

Are you *In the Arena*, or are you a spectator?

David Markovitz Brings Teddy Roosevelt Back to Life for You. David conducts keynote presentations as Teddy and conducts breakout workshops as David. Learn more about his programs at www.TeddyLeads.com.

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