Applying "Process and Content" to Good Leadership

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We all appreciate good leadership when we see it, and especially when we experience it. And when we exhibited good leadership in some difficult situation, we'd like to do that repeatedly!

Why is it that someone can exhibit good leadership at times, but cannot consistently deliver good leadership? I hypothesize that he or she (or maybe you, since you are my target audience for this article) focuses on achieving and appreciating the "content" of good leadership without understanding (or working to learn) the "process" of good leadership.

This article will only add to your confusion if you don't understand the distinction between "process" and "content." And that distinction does not come easily, because most of us focus more frequently on, "What just happened?" than on:

--"How did that just happen?"

--"When did that start to happen?"

--"Why did that just happen?"

-- "Where did that idea come from?"

--"Who made that happen?

"How did that happen?" and "Why did that happen?" (and to a lesser extent the other three sentences above) refer more to the "process" of good leadership.

Some people understand the distinction between "process" and "content" easily. A few can explain the distinction to others. Understanding this distinction did not come easily for me!

If you struggle with this distinction, please go to my website (address below) and look alphabetically for the article entitled "Recognizing and Using 'Content' and 'Process'."

Whether it comes naturally or has been intentionally learned, consistently good leaders have learned and understand the **process** of good leadership. Every process has a beginning, a middle, and an ending.

The process of good leadership **begins** with an opportunity. Maybe it's a problem that needs to be resolved, some lack of knowledge that needs to be satisfied, or a potential improvement of an existing process, product, relationship, or other situation.

The process of good leadership **ends** with a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment on the part of all the individuals involved. Some desired outcome was achieved, and a sense of victory and "overcoming the odds" was shared among all the participants.

The <u>middle</u> part of good leadership often involves a lot of work, perhaps some starting and stopping of effort, usually some modification and renewal, and always a tension between "what is" and "what could be." Despite the struggle to achieve, there is usually some sense of celebration when the "what could be" has been achieved.

So, celebrate and enjoy! And realize that there was likely some good leadership along the way!

Dennis Hooper is an executive coach serving Atlanta leaders. Almost 500 articles are contained on his website, buildingfutureleaders.com/article-archives. Contact Dennis with questions and feedback through his email, which is dennis@buildingfutureleaders.com, or leave him a phone message at 770-286-2250.

[&]quot;What just happened?" focuses on the "content" of good leadership.