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Leader of the pack

CHAD HUCULAK
SUN MEDIA

Leaders embody many characteristics, but most could usually be described as being strong, influential and guiding. Some people are born leaders while others are self-made. What makes somebody a leader is that he or she will have followers taking their cues from the leader's actions.

Doug Keeley firmly believes in the role leadership has in changing the world, as he is a self-professed "leadership junkie." However, his faith in leadership wasn't always as strong.

Future role models

"Five years ago I had my first kid late in life," said Keeley. "When you have a kid you get thinking 'who will his role models be?'"

Keeley described looking around the environment his child was being born into; the Enron scandal, worldwide terrorism, drug scandals happening in sports – it was a dubious world to be born into.

So while people like P. Diddy gripped the headlines, Keeley took on a task of collecting inspiring stories of ordinary people who had done extraordinary things. What began with a simple curiosity in people that inspired Keeley, bloomed into

a full-fledged program involving books, video, audio and multimedia.

"In the dictionary there are three definitions of a leader. The first one is about hierarchy, the second regards someone in control. The third is 'one who goes first and others follow.' That's the definition I wanted to focus on," said Keeley. "Leadership



DOUG KEELEY
Mark of a Leader author

is about taking risks, going outside of our comfort zones and being accountable for what we do."

Already a successful entrepreneur, Keeley had his fair share of stumbles in his life. With a college degree in music, he realized there was limited opportunity for a jazz guitarist and, instead jumped into the business world. After seeing his business go bankrupt and then brought back to life, he be-

came a serial entrepreneur. He was fascinated by the process of how just one person at the top of a company could be changed and the entire company would change too.

"Personally I don't believe there is a recipe for success or leadership," said Keeley. "There's no 22 or seven ways to success. Part of it is that we're all different. There is no 'one fits all' model. What I do and want my readers and viewers to also is to draw their own conclusions."

The first part of Keeley's *The Mark of a Leader* program is the book component, a collection of stories about leaders that Keeley and others have found inspiring. Leaders as diverse as The Beatles, Benjamin Franklin and Terry Fox have their stories recanted in the book, along with Keeley's reasoning for considering them worthy entries.

"Every one of these leaders are slightly different," Keeley said about the leaders in his book. "For overcoming adversity it's hard not to love the story of Oprah or Terry Fox for courage. A good model for business is Cirque du Soleil, Apple and Starbucks."

Extraordinary leaders

A common theme that weaves its way through *The Mark of a Leader* is the act of



While there is no recipe to become a successful leader in the workplace, believing in yourself and taking risks are typical qualities of great leaders.

rising from the depths of hardship and mediocrity to find success and good fortune; from ordinary to extraordinary, with hard work and determination.

"An incredible amount of leaders out there we don't hear about," said Keeley. "I'd like to think there are more,

but sadly we don't hear about them often enough."

Currently Keeley is taking his *Mark of a Leader* program into schools and into the corporation world.

"I have a powerful belief in storytelling. I think in the corporate world, the art of the story has been lost. Great

corporations and businesses are all about stories," said Keeley.

"I want people to think differently and about the story they're creating."

To order the *Mark of a Leader* or for more information, check out www.themarkofaleader.com.

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