

## Nelson's 101 Quotes for Leaders

Leadership is the process of helping people accomplish together what they would not or could not do alone. There are a lot of great leadership quotes, but here's a list of my favorites. —Alan E. Nelson

1. "Every time you have to speak, you are auditioning for leadership." --James Humes
2. "You are not here merely to make a living. You are here in order to enable the world to live more amply, with greater vision, with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world, and you impoverish yourself if you forget the errand." --Woodrow Wilson
3. "A good leader leads the people from above them. A great leader leads the people from within them."--M. D. Arnold
4. "Don't follow the crowd, let the crowd follow you." --Margaret Thatcher
5. The challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; be kind, but not weak; be bold, but not bully; be thoughtful, but not lazy; be humble, but not timid; be proud, but not arrogant; have humor, but without folly. —Jim Rohn
6. "Leadership is the art of giving people a platform for spreading ideas that work." --Seth Godin
7. "The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things." --Ronald Reagan
8. Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has. —Margaret Mead
9. "A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the equality of his actions and the integrity of his intent." --Douglas MacArthur
11. "The task of the leader is to get their people from where they are to where they have not been." --Henry Kissinger
12. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better. —Harry S. Truman
13. "I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people." --Mahatma Gandhi
14. "There are no office hours for leaders." --Cardinal J. Gibbons
15. "I can give you a six-word formula for success: Think things through--then follow through." --Edward Rickenbacker
16. "One of the tests of leadership is the ability to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency." --Arnold Glasow
17. "The speed of the leader is the speed of the gang." – Mary Kay Ash
18. "The quality of a leader is reflected in the standards they set for themselves." --Ray Kroc
19. "Do what you feel in your heart to be right, for you'll be criticized anyway." --Eleanor Roosevelt

20. "I cannot give you the formula for success, but I can give you the formula for failure, which is: Try to please everybody." --Herbert Swope
21. "True leadership lies in guiding others to success--in ensuring that everyone is performing at their best, doing the work they are pledged to do and doing it well." --Bill Owens
22. "Becoming a leader is synonymous with becoming yourself. It is precisely that simple and it is also that difficult." --Warren Bennis
23. "Wisdom is knowing what to do next, skill is knowing how to do it, and virtue is doing it." --David Star Jordan
24. "Control is not leadership; management is not leadership; leadership is leadership. If you seek to lead, invest at least 50 percent of your time in leading yourself--your own purpose, ethics, principles, motivation, conduct. Invest at least 20 percent leading those with authority over you and 15 percent leading your peers." --Dee Hock
25. "Leaders don't inflict pain, they share pain." --Max Depree
26. "Wise leaders generally have wise counselors because it takes a wise person themselves to distinguish them." --Diogenes of Sinope
27. "The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership." --Harvey S. Firestone
28. "Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right thing." --Peter F. Drucker
29. "The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers." --Ralph Nader
30. "Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality." --Warren G. Bennis
31. "A manager says, 'Go.' A leader says, 'Let's go.'" -- E.M. Kelly
32. "A leader is a person you will follow to a place you would not go by yourself." --Joel Barker
33. "A good leader takes a little more than his share of the blame, a little less than his share of the credit." --Arnold Glasow
34. "Effective leadership is not about making speeches or being liked; leadership is defined by results, not attributes." --Peter F. Drucker
35. "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way." --John Maxwell
36. "Leaders think and talk about the solutions. Followers think and talk about the problems." --Brian Tracy
37. "Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it." --Dwight D. Eisenhower
38. "The things we fear most in organizations--fluctuations, disturbances, imbalances--are the primary sources of creativity." --Margaret Wheatley
39. "A leader is best when people barely know he exists. When his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves." --Lao Tzu

40. "A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be." --Rosalynn Carter
41. "The art of leadership is saying no, not saying yes. It is very easy to say yes." --Tony Blair
42. "An army of sheep, led by a lion, can defeat an army of lions, led by a sheep." – African proverb
43. "A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus." --Martin Luther King Jr.
44. "Today a reader, tomorrow a leader." --Margaret Fuller
45. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has." --Margaret Mead
46. "A leader is a dealer in hope." —Napoleon Bonaparte
47. "A genuine leader is not a searcher of consensus, but a molder of consensus." – Martin Luther King
48. "Anyone can hold the helm when the sea is calm." --Publilius Syrus
49. "Become the kind of leader that people would follow voluntarily, even if you had no title or position." --Brian Tracy
50. "A great person attracts great people and knows how to hold them together." -- Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe
51. "Leadership is not about titles, positions, or flowcharts. It is about one life influencing others." --John C. Maxwell
52. "People buy into the leader before they buy into the vision." --John C. Maxwell
53. "If the blind lead the blind, they'll both fall into the ditch." –Jesus Christ
54. "Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others." --Jack Welch
55. "Leadership is lifting a person's vision to high sights, the raising of a person's performance to a higher standard, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations." --Peter F. Drucker
56. "People as the difference between a leader and a boss. A leader leads and a boss drives." – Theodore Roosevelt
57. "The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant." --Max DePree
58. "Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail." -- Harold R. McAlindon
59. "Keep your fears to yourself, but share your courage with others." --Robert Louis Stevenson
60. "To be able to lead others, a man must be willing to go alone." – Harry Truman
61. "Our chief want is someone who will inspire us to be what we know we could be." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

62. "A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but out to be." – Rosalynn Carter
63. "No man will make a great leader who wants to do it all himself, or to get all the credit for doing it." -  
-Andrew Carnegie
64. "Avery leaders raise the bar on themselves; good leaders raise the bar for others; great leaders inspire others to raise their own bar." – Orrin Woodward
65. "You take people as far as they will go, not as far as you would like them to go." --Jeanette Rankin
66. "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." --John F. Kennedy
67. "The role of leadership is to transform the complex situation into small pieces and prioritize them." --  
Carlos Ghosn
68. "Real leadership is leaders recognizing that they serve the people that they lead." --Pete Hoekstra
69. "Average leaders raise the bar on themselves; good leaders raise the bar for others; great leaders inspire others to raise their own bar." --Orrin Woodward
70. "To do great things is difficult; but to command great things is more difficult." -Friedrich Nietzsche
71. "Ninety percent of leadership is the ability to communicate something people want."--Dianne Feinstein
72. "Effective leadership is putting first things first. Effective management is discipline, carrying it out." --  
Stephen Covey
73. "All of the great leaders have had one characteristic in common: it was the willingness to confront unequivocally the major anxiety of their people in their time. This, and not much else, is the essence of leadership." --John Kenneth Galbraith
74. "The task of leadership is not to put greatness into humanity, but to elicit it, for the greatness is already there." --John Buchan
75. "If you want to change the world, focus on leaders. If you want to change leaders, focus on them when they're young." –Alan E. Nelson
76. "Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate, and doubt to offer a solution everybody can understand." --Colin Powell
77. "A leader is not an administrator who loves to run others, but someone who carries water for his people so that they can get on with their jobs." --Robert Townsend
78. "Leadership cannot really be taught. It can only be learned." --Harold Geneen
79. "Look over your shoulder now and then to be sure someone's following you." --Henry Gilmer
80. "Leadership is not magnetic personality that can just as well be a glib tongue. It is not 'making friends and influencing people,' that is flattery. Leadership is lifting a person's vision to higher sights, the raising of a person's performance to a higher standard, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations." --Peter F. Drucker
81. "Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower." --Steve Jobs

82. "Great leaders are not defined by the absence of weakness, but rather by the presence of clear strengths." --John Zenger
83. "Good leaders must first become good servants." – Robert Greenleaf
84. "Leadership is unlocking people's potential to become better." --Bill Bradley
85. "The greatest leaders mobilize others by coalescing people around a shared vision." --Ken Blanchard
86. "The supreme quality of leadership is integrity." --Dwight D. Eisenhower
87. "We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light." —Plato
88. "Earn your leadership every day." --Michael Jordan
89. "As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others." --Bill Gates
90. "You cannot be a leader, and ask other people to follow you, unless you know how to follow, too." -- Sam Rayburn
91. "When eagles are silent, parrots begin to chatter." – Winston Churchill
92. "To handle yourself, use your head; to handle others, use your heart." --Eleanor Roosevelt
93. "Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power." -  
-Abraham Lincoln
94. "Leadership is an ever-evolving position." --Mike Krzyzewski
95. "Great leadership at the top doesn't amount to much if you don't have exceptional leadership at the unit level. That's where great things get done." – Jim Collins
96. "Leadership is an action, not a position." --Donald McGannon
97. "Don't tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results." -- George S. Patton Jr.
98. "A true leader never stops being a student, always learning, improving. I don't listen to know-it-alls." – Lakeisha M Williams
99. "A leader is one who sees more than others see, who sees further than others see, and who sees before others see." --Leroy Eimes
100. "A person who wants to lead the orchestra must turn their back on the crowd." – Max Lucado
101. "What we achieve inwardly will change outer reality." —Plutarch

Bio: Alan E. Nelson, Ed.D. teaches at the USC Marshall School of Business and the Naval Postgraduate School. He is also the Los Angeles Chair of the Institute for Management Studies and founder of LeadYoung Training Systems ([www.LeadYoungTraining.com](http://www.LeadYoungTraining.com)). Dr. Nelson lives near Los Angeles, CA.