

Cultivate Virtue

It is no easy thing to lead other human beings. I believe the most important thing is to win people over with virtue. Therefore, leaders must strive to refine their own moral character. To cultivate the kind of moral character that can make allies of those who oppose us in exercising power, we must always try to understand the feelings of others and improve our own character.

From *Shidosha no joken* ("Conditions for Leaders"), PHP Institute, December 1975

Find People's Strengths

It is important to recognize people's strengths honestly. I have always tried to discern the strengths of my employees and use them to advantage. Managers have many subordinates, and those who can see the strengths of their subordinates are very fortunate. You can't run a business if you are the only one who has strengths. Ultimately, I believe the benefits of seeing and using strengths outweigh concerns about weaknesses.

From *Oru seikatsu* ("All about Life"), Jitsugyo no Nihon Sha, January 1963

Set Appropriate Goals

If you can't set appropriate goals and aspirations for your subordinates, you are not qualified to lead. If goals are given appropriately, most people will work freely and ingeniously. Set goals in a way that motivates people to achieve in accordance with their abilities. Set and maintain appropriate goals with an eye to timing. Your ability to do this will determine whether you can make the most of your people.

From *Hoseki* ("Gem"), Kobunsha, October 1985

Trust and Delegate

It is important to have a basic attitude of trust. I have had more success than failure by being ready to delegate without hesitation. It's rare to be able to delegate to somebody you trust 100%. Sometimes I have 60% confidence and 40% of unease at the same time. But I always say, "You can do it. I'm counting on you."

From The Chunichi Shimbun, October 1973

Listen to Your Subordinates

I always try to listen to my subordinates as much as possible. Some people let their subordinates talk for 10 minutes, but then they talk for an hour. "Give it everything you have, and you will be successful." That's all you need to say. There is no need to lecture. Scolding and warning are the same. If you say too much, you make it less likely that people will reflect on your words. One word is enough. If you say three words, they will have the opposite effect.

From the Summer Management Meeting, August 1980

Teaching the Taste of Salt

We all know how salty salt is and how sweet sugar is. However, if you have never tasted sugar or salt, you can't know what they are really like. It is the same with work and business. I believe it is only through first-hand experience that one can grow as a manager. The important thing is to be fully aware of this necessity. With such a mindset, even if you don't have many opportunities for first-hand experience, you will be able to glean something from the ones you do.

From *Jinji mangekyo* ("Kaleidoscope of Human Resources"), PHP Institute, 1977

Develop People with Praise

You can manage people by praising, scolding, or criticizing them. But when you need to point out a mistake, use praise first. "You've done a great job. But what about this part? How about fixing it?" From my experience, presidents of growing companies and owners of growing businesses usually praise their employees. The important thing is to raise your subordinates to the next level.

From the Summer Management Meeting, August 1980

Use Dialog, Not Orders

When you want someone to handle a task, don't simply issue an order. Orders don't cultivate intelligence and dependability. You must approach such interactions as a dialog whenever possible. "What's your opinion? Here's what I think." If you incorporate your subordinates' ideas and suggestions into the task, they will make it their own and work with enthusiasm.

From *Hito wo ikasu keiei* ("Management for Maximizing People's Potential") PHP Institute, September 1979

Don't Be Hard on Big Mistakes

When people make big mistakes, it's better not to be too hard on them. Comfort them instead. "Don't worry, sometimes people make mistakes. Next time, take a different approach and do your best. You may find that you succeed." The person making the mistake is suffering enough. If you criticize them, they'll suffer even more. Instead, relieve them of that burden. Give them strength.

NHK interview, March 1976

Practice "Right Person, Right Place"

Human resources are not something one can wait for, nor are they easy to find. Those with leadership responsibilities must nurture excellent personnel actively. They should make every effort to gently draw out the hidden talents and untapped creativity of their subordinates. Having the right person in the right place will strengthen the overall function of the company and multiply it several times over.

From a morning assembly address, May 1943