

## **Best Practice 4: ADVOCATOR of DIFFERENCES and COMMUNITY™ (BEING: Advocate)**

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An advocator is one who stands firm in support. It is about BEING someone who is courageous enough to take a stand, and stay standing. It means having a well-defined sense of right, and the internal strength to defend it. A leader cannot DO this, if he or she cannot BE it. It is an unfortunate truth in business today that we do not find too many people who are so clear about who they are that they are willing to take a firm stand regardless of consequences. But a Legacy Leader® is a ready advocate for what is right, which often involves risk. The word advocator was selected because it carries more strength than defender or supporter. This is about internal commitment to causes, practices and people.

### **Critical Success Skills: Core Competencies**

Legacy Leaders acknowledge the importance and benefit of differences, and have an openness to diverse perspectives. They work hard to remove labels and prejudices, overcome comfort zones, and eliminate "rubber stamp" and "cookie cutter" mentality. Becoming a successful advocator of differences and community requires a keen desire to know others as people, not mere resources, and an understanding that when one grows and succeeds, all do. Advocating differences develops a passion for learning and discovery that unites these differences into a community process instead of personal agenda. The ten critical success skills for this Legacy Practice serve to generate a team-building environment that tears down personal, departmental or organizational "walls" or silos, and fabricates a healthy culture based on understanding the community strength and ultimate success afforded in differences.

1. Be able to take a stand for a person, practice or cause.
2. Constantly raise visibility of individuals by mentoring and developing them.
3. Advocate for a strengths-based culture.
4. Be a connoisseur of talent, recognizing, valuing and utilizing the best each person has to offer.
5. Insist on building teams with diverse approaches and capabilities.
6. Look for and create cross-functional opportunities to develop unique talent.

7. Promote inter-departmental collaboration, rather than "silo " orientation.
8. Consider impact of actions on greater community (beyond organization).
9. Maintain ongoing dialogue/involvement with internal/ external communities.
10. Promote inclusive environment to unite toward common focus.

## **BE-Attitudes of an Advocate of Differences and Community**

Great leaders who successfully apply this Legacy Practice will have a number of attitudes, traits and characteristics which allow them to fully advocate for differences and community. We could include such things as partnership-oriented, non-territorial, sharing, an enabler, and a promoter. These attitudes are all necessary. For leaders to truly live their legacy in this practice, however, there are some foundational BE-attitudes necessary to elevate their leadership from significance to legacy. We have listed the features we consider the Top Five BE-attitudes for your consideration in this Legacy Practice. These are not listed in any order of importance. Brief descriptions follow.

A Legacy Leader, an Advocate of Differences and Community, is:

### 1. A Champion

This person is a ready advocate for individuals or causes. They are natural encouragers, supporters, defenders and upholders. These leaders are others-centered, always seeking opportunities to champion people and issues worthy of support. These people are, however, careful and thoughtful in this support, taking a stand only after discerning whether or not people or issues align with their values.

### 2. Inclusive/A Uniter

This person has a natural or practiced ability to unite people in teams, for causes, to achieve results and to develop community. This inclusiveness always seeks uniquenesses and strengths to add to the overall vigor of the community, and has the ability to recognize value in diversity where others may not.

### 3. Community-Minded

This person is able to identify common denominators and uniting factors in groups, and uses these commonalities to build teams of people with shared goals. These leaders understand that the greatest

accomplishments are the result of working together as a whole, where every individual is valued and recognized.

#### 4. Discerning

This person has either an inherent or cultivated ability to make solid decisions and judgments based on sound consideration of all information available. He or she is able to distinguish between close and seemingly similar things for the betterment of self and others. These leaders are able to determine and recognize individual gifts, strengths and uniquenesses. This ability allows them to build strong diverse teams.

#### 5. Expectant (Sense of Expectancy)

This person is always expecting results, anticipating goals to be met and people to work together to achieve common objectives. This expectancy is modeled to others who then sense, understand and therefore work toward stated goals, often with a renewed focus or urgency.

These leaders have a clear sense of vision, strategies and ultimate purpose for being in community, on which their expectancy is based.