

Before taking sides first let us discuss the attributes of a good leader -

- The most important pre requisite for leaders is to have good professional knowledge and professional competence irrespective of the field or organization they belong to.
- Leaders should have the ability to take decisions and take full responsibility of them. It is because of the lack of this quality, projects are delayed, costs escalate, money and at times lives are lost. A person who does not take a decision lacks confidence. Lack of confidence is often a result of lack of professional knowledge and competence.
- Leaders should have moral as well as physical courage. In case a person lacks moral courage, he/she ends up becoming a yes person and is likely to be used by superiors for their undue favours, and also cannot earn respect from his/her subordinates.
- Leader should be absolutely just and impartial.
- Leader should be disciplined and should have a strong character. Honesty, discipline, truthfulness are parts of character, but a leader should know his/her strengths & weaknesses well, knowing what he/she really is and should not get deluded by the affection of fans, family etc.
- Apart from these hardcore characters, leaders should also have a human touch, empathy, humour. So that he/she can understand people, their issues and problems better. When going gets tough, leader should be able to uplift the mood and morale of subordinates with the sense of humour and liveliness.

Now looking at the above mentioned pre requisites for a person to be a leader, we can easily say that a person may have some, not all leadership qualities by birth. Like he/she may be a cheerful person by birth but no one is born with professional knowledge or competence. As a matter of fact no one is born with any of the hardcore attributes discussed above. They all develop over time according to the conditions, environment and values in which a child is brought up, place where a person works, aspirations and goals of a person and the circle with whom he/she hangs out with.

Conclusion :-

It can be inferred logically from the above article that leaders are made and not born. And a person with reasonable common sense and decency can be turned into a leader when subjected to proper practices and surroundings.

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These thoughts are taken from the 'Speech on Leadership' By Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw.



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