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# Becoming a S.A.V.I.I.G. Leader

Anthony DeNino

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## Becoming a S.A.V.I.I.G. Leader

*“No! Not another article about leadership!”* you may find yourself saying. And admittedly, there are a number of articles, papers, and opinion pieces out there about leadership. And understanding the differences between a boss and a leader. Plus, the whole manager vs. boss vs. leader discussion.

And while there is compelling proof that leaders are far more effective than bosses and managers, I'd like to layout the qualities that make up becoming a great leader. Specifically, it's about becoming a S.A.V.I.I.G. (pronounced, “savage”) leader. When executed, these qualities will enhance a leader's trust, build confidence among his/her team, and promote the highest-level culture within your organization.

So, what does S.A.V.I.I.G. stand for?

It stands for six key qualities, that when practiced with sincerity, will help you and your team grow in ways that are both measurable and immeasurable. They are: **S**trategic, **A**uthentic, **V**ulnerable, **I**nspirational, **I**ntegrity, **G**ratitude. Let's take a brief look at each one.

**Strategic** – whatever association, nonprofit, or business you may be a part of, leadership should have a sound, working knowledge of what you're trying to accomplish. They should be able to formulate effective and sustaining plans aimed at elevating your organization to operate at its peak abilities.

**Authentic** – we've heard the term, “Fake it until you make it.” and there are many people who have “made it” to a leadership role. However, the time for faking it is over. As a leader, people are looking to you as an example. They're looking at you as a person who has developed and wants to share their sincere desire to make you and your organization a better place to work and grow.

**Vulnerable** – often looked at as a “soft” word, being vulnerable is a great characteristic when looking to lead by example. Being vulnerable, I feel, is actually a strength because it lets your team know that you're willing to put yourself out there with your thoughts, ideas, and visions. It also serves the dual purpose of giving others permission to do the same. A lot of great plans, for example, were born from poor ones. Being vulnerable sets the stage for growth...for you as a leader, for your employees, and for your organization.

**Inspirational** – Many people love a charismatic leader, however, being inspirational doesn't necessarily have to have charisma as a characteristic. You can inspire others with your style, by your work ethic, by being a great listener, and in a whole host of other ways. Being able to reach others on an emotional level through a great, motivational speech is a wonderful and helpful ways to inspire. Just realize, though, that it's not the only way.

**Integrity** – you may have all the characteristics discussed above, but if you don't act with integrity in the way you go about your business and in the way you treat your employees, your efforts will not be accepted. People can see through those who are not acting in an honest and strongly principled way. You were chosen as a leader for a reason. Lead by example in this vital attribute of leadership.

**Gratitude** – as often as you can and in as many ways as you can show, be grateful. Be thankful. Be appreciative for the opportunity you now have as a leader, show gratitude toward your

employees...regardless of whether they are always the best at what they do...because others always love feeling appreciated. Plus, it sets a fantastic cultural tone that will reverberate throughout your association, nonprofit, or business.

With the above breakdown, being a S.A.V.I.I.G. leader also comes down to this one needed attribute for being a strong leader...being an **effective communicator**. If you were to show me a top notch, highly successful organization, I'll show you one where their leaders effectively communicate; their thoughts, ideas, and visions; with their employees and each other through their words, and by listening; with - when appropriate - their customers; and in their messaging.

Traditionally, being savage, as one definition states, means "being fierce, violent, and uncontrolled." Who would have thought then, that being S.A.V.I.I.G. would now carry such a positive, impactful, and growth-minded context?

*Anthony DeNino, aka, "The SMART Guy" – **Success Means Acquiring Right Thoughts** – is a Keynote Speaker, Leadership Trainer, Employee Trainer, and Consultant for businesses, associations, nonprofits, and government agencies. He is a Certified Stress Management Coach, has developed the **XwE – eXecute with Excellence Leadership Training Program**, and is a Mental Performance Coach working with employees and leadership in one-on-one and group settings. Learn more by visiting [www.CreatingOurReality.com](http://www.CreatingOurReality.com) and contact him at [TheSmartGuy@CreatingOurReality.com](mailto:TheSmartGuy@CreatingOurReality.com).*

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