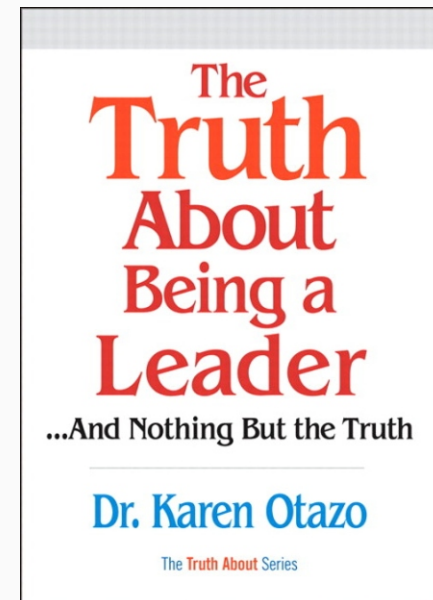


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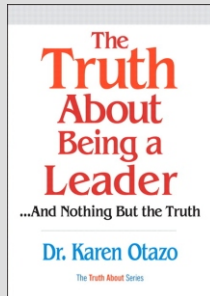
The Truth About Being a Leader

...And Nothing But the Truth

by Dr. Karen Otazo

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The Big Idea

In this book, Dr. Karen Otazo reveals 52 often unspoken “truths” designed to let you in on the profound secrets of successful leaders which are easy to put into action.



Part 1. The truth about assuming a leadership position

Truth 1: More-responsible roles require more mental “bandwidth”

To lead effectively, you need to be able to handle many areas simultaneously. The many balls you are juggling mean that the greater demands of a new position can expose areas in which your experience may be lacking.

The 7 areas which often require constant attention:

- Your personal work habits
- Your personal mood and stress management
- Your leadership infrastructure and systems
- Your vision and strategy
- Your relationship with your leadership team members
- Your relationship with your peers and colleagues
- Your relationship with your boss

Truth 2: Inheriting an assistant requires reeducation

Your relationship with your assistant is important. Developing that relationship as early as possible increases the effectiveness and efficiency of your working together. Establish a good relationship depending on your style, his or her style, and the situation.

Truth 3: Staffing your leadership office: Your assistant plays a vital role

Your assistant serves as an advertisement for who you are in your organization. When interviewing applicants, you should:

- Your relationship with your boss
- Ask them to talk about what they did in every job they had since school, or at least in the last two to four positions.
- Ask what they thought of previous bosses' strengths and weaknesses.
- Ask about hypothetical situations.
- Acknowledge expectations.



Truth 4: The gaps in your work habits show when you move up

The higher you go on the organizational chart, the more complicated things get. If you don't know how to organize yourself, the complexity of your new environment will overwhelm you.

• You should:

- Keep up with scheduling.
- Delegate using quality standards and due dates.
- Follow up on delegation and commitments.
- Make decision-making clear.
- Follow the money.
- Ensure fairness in all you say and do.
- Let go of being one of the guys.

Truth 5: A resource-based view of your organization goes beyond the numbers

Intangible resources such as customers, learning, staff, innovation, capacity, inventory control and morale can make or break your company's success. Think of each resource as a bathtub with two valves-- one bringing in the elements of that resource and one draining them. Your job is to ensure you have enough of the right kind of resources where you need them.

Part II. The truth about effective leadership styles

Truth 6: Soft-spoken leadership requires stamina

Less-conspicuous, more-measured leadership can work as well as the introverted kind. This requires things being done cleanly and firmly.

Key moves:

- Keep your communication personal.
- Take your time before acting.
- Prepare well before speaking.

Truth 7: Bullshit makes good fertilizer-- just watch your step

BS can be a good thing when it is used to help ideas grow. However, it should be used in moderation.



Principal situations where BS works well:

- Brainstorming.
- Selling an idea.
- Relaxing others.
- Scenario planning.

Truth 8: Player/coach is a tricky role, so make sure you do both well

You can coach and play by:

- Sharing your thinking.
- Weighing the needs of each situation.
- Thinking ahead with your staff.

Truth 9: Caring leaders treat their teams like family.

Support and back-up the leaders and managers who report to you. This encourages good communication and effective working.

Key behavior:

- Ongoing, up-to-date communication.
- Ongoing feedback.

Truth 10: Innovation requires preparation.

Innovation should be built-in systematically to foster it in your organization.

- Encourage your team to embrace mistakes.
- Promote “messy” thinking.
- Invite contrary opinions.
- Consider using “skunkworks,” or under-the-radar projects.
- Be a cheerleader as well as a coach.

Part III. The truth about what you say as a leader

Truth 11: Match your leadership message to your audience

By observing someone, you can determine how you present your information in the way he or she prefers to receive it. Providing information in a variety of forms gives everyone something to focus on.



Truth 12: Impactful leaders speak simply

A simple message is always the most understandable and memorable.

Ways to craft your message carefully:

- Consider everyone's expectations.
- Write out those expectations in headline form.
- Create your talking points.
- Stick to the essentials.
- Offer your audience the chance to get more information.

Truth 13: Sound bites need to sizzle

Sounds bites are not a full meal of ideas, but tasty tidbits that are easily digestible. To make them more effective, pause at important points and emphasize key words.

Truth 14: Your tone of voice should command attention

- Command tone is what teachers and military use.
- Crisp, clear enunciation make you easy to understand.
- Pause after phrases and at the end of sentences.

Truth 15: Names matter to people, so get them right

To build strong and trusting working relationships, remember others' names, and spell and say them correctly.

Ways to improve proper name recall:

- Do your research.
- Write down the name phonetically.
- Practice.
- Ask people to repeat their names.
- Ask a question about the name.
- Use the name immediately.
- Write down the name.

Truth 16: “Coming attractions” get others tuned in to your message

Prepare your audience by using a “primary frame”, the organizational version of coming attractions.



The main messages they should be used to convey:

- The agenda of what you'll say.
- The timing of what you're telling or asking.
- The purpose behind your request or comment.
- The vision or goals you discussed before.

Part IV. The truth about leadership vision

Truth 17: What's the big idea? Bring your guiding rules into everyday organizational life

Empower your staff to live by the organization's big ideas by communicating them clearly.

Express these principles in clear and simple language:

- How you run the business (guiding principles or rules of engagement that everyone must follow).
- Where you want the organization to go.
- Give your team your groundrules.

Truth 18: Stories help make change clear

Presenting change through the filter of a story can help people consider issues more effectively.

Some ways that stories can be used as leadership tools:

- Stories remove people from their everyday reality.
- Stories are metaphors for what can happen in your organization.
- Stories provide a clear hook that helps people see a vision or objective as real.

Truth 19: Playing out the tape helps others prepare for the future

Effective leaders learn to fast-forward by developing a vision of what they want to see in the future. You can bring other people along with you by “playing out the tape” for them, leading employees in their time frame, not yours.

Truth 20: Leaders frame the discussion

How you describe something has a great impact on how others see it. You must learn how to articulate or “frame” your thinking in a way that anticipates perceived needs and shapes others' responses advantageously.

- Keep it simple.
- Keep saying it.
- Keep it real.



Part V. The truth about leadership presence and power

Truth 21: A leader is always “on”

Leaders set the tone for their team or organization, so they must always appear in control, inspired and positive. Being “on” is about ensuring that your staff has a secure and positive environment that keeps them focused, engaged and on-task.

Truth 22: Choose your battles carefully

Political capital is like a bank account: you add to your account when you support others and are successful, and you make withdrawals when you oppose or upset others. Political capital accounts are long-term investments and should always be kept in the black.

Truth 23: Your stress ripples across the organization

The spillover effect happens when people become overwhelmed with stress.

To reduce personal stress:

- Eat, drink and rest regularly.
- Reduce muscle tension.

To reduce group stress:

- Factor stress into timelines.
- Delegate and empower.

Truth 24: Let your energy be like fine champagne- not too bubbly or flat

Like a glass of fine champagne, a leader's manner should be just energetic enough to be pleasantly stimulating, with neither too little nor too much fizz.

To keep your energy effervescent:

- Pay attention to your health and well-being.
- Relax and prepare before speaking with other people.
- Know when it will be hard to be effervescent and postpone or pay extra attention to your energy impact.
- Frame what you are saying by indicating that you are passionate and committed to overcoming flat energy, and to explaining the reason for overcarbonated energy.



Truth 25: You need to “read” like a leader in the blink of an eye

Your overall body language is 60 percent of what people remember about you, so present yourself as a leader with every part of yourself that's visible.

Observe the following pointers:

- Set your intentions.
- Compose your expression.
- Compose your hands.

Truth 26: Good leadership is the wise use of power

Leaders have the duty to learn to use power wisely in order to empower the organization and employees. True power comes from many areas including your staff believing in your expertise and trusting you as a leader while knowing that you have the clout to get things done on their behalf. The chapter has a chart with the over, under and wise use of power.

Part VI. The truth about getting things done

Truth 27: Often the best decision is empowering someone else to decide

It is neither possible nor in your best interest to make every decision yourself. Delegating some decisions is vital to the development of your team.

Decision-making options:

- The leader alone.
- The leader with input from your team.
- The leader in equal partnership with your team.
- Your team with input from you.
- Your team on their own.

Truth 28: Adjust your leadership style to fit the employee

The general foundations of a job are skills, experience, motivation and supervision. New hires often need a telling or parental style of leadership. After 9 to 12 months, a coaching style is better. When employees can make day-to-day decisions, a supporting style is preferred. When the person is familiar with the job inside and out, a delegating style is best.

Truth 29: No good deed goes unpunished

As a leader, being respected is much more important than being liked. Good deeds can often backfire.



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Three varieties of good deeds:

- Special favors or exceptions.
- Letting people off the hook.
- Doing for others what they can do for themselves.

Truth 30: The structure is not the organization, just as the map is not the territory

In a healthy organization, restructuring happens whenever the needs of the organization change. There is no fool-proof way to do it. What really counts is the soft stuff, like choosing the right people. The organization chart cannot measure the impact of the players. .

Truth 31: Coming in from the outside? Pay your dues!

When coming in from the outside to take on a leadership position, especially when change is required:

- Connect with people in person and by phone, not just through e-mail.
- Get the “champions” on your side.
- Think holistically: don't change procedures in one place without looking at the impact elsewhere.
- Involve people outside your organization.

Truth 32: Delegation is a confidence game

Successful delegation requires two interdependent yet separate types of confidence:

- Personal confidence.
- Leadership confidence.

A useful way to develop well-grounded delegation confidence in your team is to consider their abilities and commitment, or skills and “will.”

Part VII. The truth about motivating and inspiring your team

Truth 33: Questions unite; answers divide

Questions have the core purpose of seeking information. In an organizational context, questions are about a collective quest for knowledge and insight, opening issues, drawing contributions and generating dialogue. The best questions are often open-ended. Answers, or statements, close down dialogue and can be divisive.



Truth 34: Feedback is the best kind of criticism

Criticism is part of working life; we all get and give it on a daily basis. You can help someone improve by encouraging him or her to see a situation objectively, through feedback.

Three stages:

- Careful observation.
- Describe what you see to that person, offering a second picture of what might work better.
- Discuss together how to close the gap by creating a new picture.

Truth 35: You have more than the carrot and the stick

As a leader, you must find appropriate ways to challenge and stretch your staff. Extrinsic motivators such as carrots and sticks may not work as well in the long-term. Using intrinsic motivators, which reflect an individual's beliefs and values, aids in motivation.

Truth 36: Quick coaching keeps your team on course

Like a coach in between boxing rounds, 60-second coaching-in-action minutes are a way to give guidance and feedback to stay on course. They need to be immediately applicable and upbeat to keep up energy and focus.

Truth 37: Little things mean a lot

Tell your team the seemingly-inconsequential details so they can understand the bigger picture.

- What's happening now?
- What's coming up?
- How're they doing? Everyone wants personal feedback.

Part VIII. The truth about molding your team

Truth 38: A leader cares passionately about developing people

Success at all levels depends on people and their development as well as on business trends and analysis.

Two ways to nurture talent:

- Regularly include a discussion on people when business discussions occur.
- Ask probing questions of the leaders who report to you.



Truth 39: Succession planning ensures your bench strength

As a business leader, you need to ensure that you have the right players on your bench to competently fill your team's jobs now and in the future.

This includes the following stages:

- Gathering your top team.
- Establishing a discussion framework.
- Assessing the players.
- Determining ways to broaden skills and abilities.

Truth 40: Your team is key to your success: vet them well

A great team is essential to the accomplishment of your goals, and it is your job to vet, or test, them by:

- Talking with others.
- Observing your team.
- Testing your team.
- Coaching your team.

Truth 41: Dedicate your coaching time where it does the most good

Coaching is an important way to help your followers develop their skill. However, you should remember that you can't coach everything, and that the smallest of changes can make a big difference. The most rewarding coaching comes from focusing on the areas where you can do the most good with the lightest touch.

Truth 42: Awkward discussions are tough; play offense, not defense

You should take charge of the situation in awkward discussions. Focus on what is realistic, what is possible and what you want for yourself and others.

Part IX. The truth about your leadership reputation

Truth 43: Ideas come across differently with different media

To use media effectively, keep these points in mind:

- Print media- find out which publications are most relevant to your organization, and capture their attention by thinking up angles to grab readers' interest.
- Visual media- invest resources in generating the best still and moving images of you and your organization.
- New media- have a well designed and up-to-date website. Pay attention to blogs.



Truth 44: You can't hide the sun with your hand-- be honest

Keep nothing but the most sensitive information secret. Hiding information can negatively affect a company's reputation. Most importantly, never lie.

Principles to follow:

- Details of individuals' personal lives should always be kept confidential.
- Good news should always be shared quickly.
- People should also know quickly about bad news and losses.

Truth 45: Spouses and partners must be on their best behavior

Your partner reflects your leadership judgment and ability; make sure that he or she is aware of the “rules”.

Dos:

- Behave graciously with staff at all levels.
- Plan your conversation at social events.

Don'ts:

- Don't divulge opinions about your partners job unless you have discussed and rehearsed it.
- Don't complain about anyone or anything work-related at a social event.
- Don't disagree with anyone in public.

Truth 46: You don't get your meat where you get your potatoes

Avoid intimate encounters on the job. Top-level leaders set standards for others to follow; the higher you go as a leader, the tougher the rules.

Truth 47: Don't get tangled in the grapevine

Learn to distinguish important talk from inconsequential noise.

When confronted with troubling information, do the following:

- Consider the speaker's motivation.
- Be careful not to take gossip as the truth about someone.
- Model the behavior that you want to see in your organization.



Part X. The truth about your connections

Truth 48: You can't microwave your leadership relationships

When moving into a new leadership role, you have to let meaningful connections develop gradually.

Ways to help develop connections:

- Identify connections that will be vital to you in your new role.
- Consult with people and share your plans.
- Keep it up; keep a checklist.

Truth 49: Your network is your lifeline to influence and information

The more influential your leadership position, the more you need to establish relationships with people in the know and who have clout. Once you find these people, nurture your relationships with them. This chapter is a blueprint to do so.

Truth 50: Peers and power are a potent mix

Your new peers may see you as competition. Developing trust is tricky. The best way is to keep it clean and clear.

Truth 51: It's lonely at the top; keep it that way

Once you reach the top, you cannot afford to be too open with anyone inside or close to the organization. Find an outside thinking partner who has as much experience and knowledge as you.

Truth 52: Trust and loyalty are long-term goals

You need people you can trust. It pays to put in the time and effort to build mutual trust with your team and colleagues.

Four major types of trust:

- Get-it-done trust.
- Expertise trust.
- Political savvy trust.
- Structural trust.



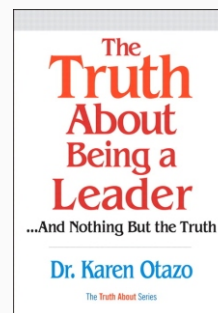
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Dr. Karen Otazo, Managing Director of Global Leadership Network, Inc. is a global executive coach and thinking partner for multinational companies worldwide. With more than twenty-five years of experience working with clients in the United States, China, Indonesia, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, Europe, and Singapore, Otazo is uniquely equipped to work with executives in global corporations, national subsidiaries, joint ventures, and strategic alliances. Her blue-chip client list includes BoozAllen Hamilton, Chase Bank, Colgate-Palmolive, Credit Suisse First Boston, The Economist Group, General Electric, Goldman Sachs, Lehman Brothers, Marks & Spencer, Motorola, Pepsico, Time International, and Vodafone. She earned a doctorate in Human Resources Development from the University of Northern Colorado, and holds masters and bachelors degrees in linguistics from City University of New York. Otazo is fluent in English, Spanish, French, Indonesian, and Mandarin Chinese.

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