

How to Think Like a CEO and Act Like a Leader

Michael F. Andrew

This book is recommended:

If you want to develop your personal leadership skills and business knowledge to differentiate yourself among your peers.

If you want to be successful and build solid relationships that achieve results.

If you want an easy-to-understand explanation to the world of business, finance and leadership.



Whether you are part of a large organization or a small one, whether you have a senior role or an entry-level position, *How To Think Like A CEO and Act Like A Leader: Practical Insights for Performance & Results!* by author and business consultant Michael Andrew educates the novice, sharpens the pro, and shares easy-to-implement directives on how to succeed in business and life. Filled with

resonating insights that will guide you, this book simplifies the true nature of business to teach readers the CEO perspective on strategic thinking and finance, while providing practical leadership directives to be productive and results-oriented.

Consider this a mini-MBA and introduction into the world of strategic thinking, finance, leadership and business so that you will be able to act like a leader and think like a CEO.

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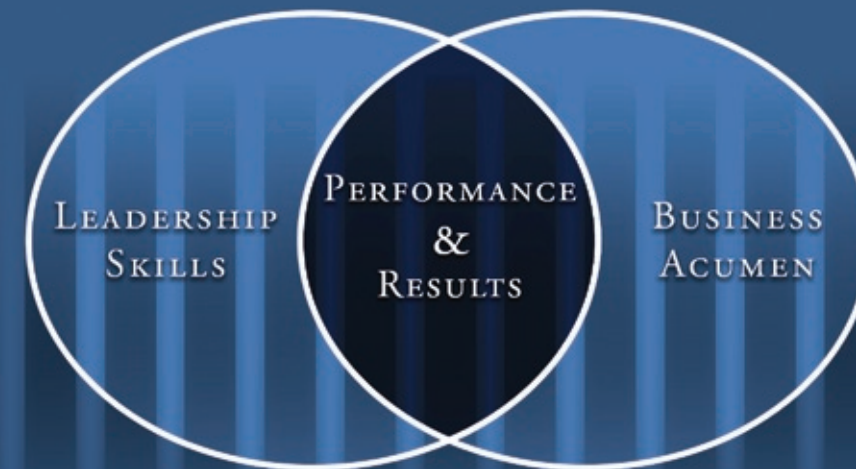
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Practical Insights for
Performance & Results!



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Chapter 1

Treat Issues Coldly, People Warmly

To handle yourself, use your head;

To handle others, use your heart.

Eleanor Roosevelt, Diplomat – Writer, First Lady of the United States

If you have ever read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Harper Lee, or watched the movie version, you will recall that Atticus Finch, played so adroitly by Gregory Peck, had this incredible ability to deal with a series of difficult issues. As an attorney representing a black man in the South in the early part of the twentieth century, he faced disparaging reactions from the residents of his town. Yet, despite it all, he dealt with it directly and candidly, and with aplomb. He did so while treating people, whether they agreed with him or not, warmly and respectfully. Despite the rantings of those in opposition, he managed to treat them, as well as the defendant and his family, with dignity.

If you are as old as I am, you can recall the conservative Republican President Ronald Reagan and the highly spirited and public disagreements he had with Tip O'Neil, the Democratic and liberal Speaker of the US House of Representatives (from my home state of Massachusetts). Their fights and disagreements

were commonplace, yet these two men considered themselves great friends, and treated each other with a high degree of respect. They treated issues coldly, and treated each other warmly.

Treat issues coldly and people warmly. These two components are not mutually exclusive. You can actually do both. Why is this important? What do you gain when you treat an issue coldly and treat the person coldly at the same time? You may win the battle, or the debate, or the argument, but at what price? Even if you are 100% correct on an issue, what is gained if you also treat the person coldly? Treating people with dignity is simply the right thing to do. Isn't it possible to deal with the issue or behavior directly and firmly without being a jerk? This is what makes diplomacy effective. What does it mean to treat people warmly? It doesn't mean to stroke them on the arm, or come across as friendly, nice, or the proverbial "touchy-feely." It means treating the other person with dignity and respect and maintaining his or her self-esteem. It is sort of like telling people where to go to (so to speak), but they look forward to the trip.

I once received feedback from a client that went like this: "Mike, you have demonstrated your talent to us, you did what you said you were going to do by hitting a home run for us by leveraging your network or relationships to build a great program. But I'd like to see you step up a bit more than you have lately to allow us to use your insights to keep improving this program. You have not done that for us and we have been expecting it." Was I upset? I was upset at myself for not identifying that expectation previously, but the client delivered the feedback to me in such a palatable manner that it made me determined to go back to exceeding the client's expectations of me. In fact, I was thankful for the feedback. It helped me and I never forgot

it. Our business relationship continued to flourish to the point that when he moved on to another company, he chose me over a world-renowned consulting firm for another high-visibility program for the top 600 executives of the company.

On the other hand, there may be a time and place to deal coldly with both the issue and the person—especially if someone has been warned on numerous occasions and knows better. Yet, even in this scenario, you can still be candid and direct, focus on the issue or behavior, and treat the person in a dignified manner. He or she needs to get the message clearly. Doris Kearns Goodwin wrote a most insightful book on Abraham Lincoln entitled *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*. The book is full of examples of Lincoln treating issues coldly and people warmly. The unrestrained candor he extended to his military generals, cabinet members, and other citizens, while respecting their dignity, is worth examining. It was one of his key attributes as a leader. Even in the most pressing times, with the country in the midst of a civil war, with his generals not performing to expectations, and with certain cabinet members displaying some disingenuous behavior during that time, Lincoln was amazingly effective in demonstrating magnanimity in his leadership.

Whether the relationship is important, such as one involving a family member, friend, colleague, or employee, or simply a quick transactional one, such as one involving a hotel clerk, fast-food clerk, gas station attendant, etc., doesn't matter. There may be more at stake, but it still boils down to being effective in dealing with an issue candidly and directly, i.e., coldly, and the person or people respectfully, i.e., warmly. Treating issues coldly and people warmly is not just good business, it is about having integrity in your interactions with people. Treating is-

sues directly and people warmly is a practical way to achieve and sustain results through others.

- **Think of a difficult personal or business situation that you need to confront. How will you treat the issue coldly and the person warmly?**