

## Vision

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I have written 2 invited articles so far for the Thai J Gastroenterology, one in 2007 (vol. 8, No. 1) and the other in 2012 (vol. 13, No. 1), I am not sure if the President(s), GAT Council, or members of GAT then (who may now be on the GAT Council) have read my articles carefully and did something about it (some at least) or not. I always say that leaders must have leadership qualities but unfortunately not all leaders have leadership qualities. I personally think that everybody must be taught how to become good leaders i.e. taught to have leadership qualities, long before they are elected or appointed leaders. Some are, however, born to be leaders.

What are leadership qualities? Recently a former student of mine who is doing postgraduate work abroad wrote to me about this, and my answer to her was about 9 pages long! I think every doctor (or any other person) must be taught all these qualities even when they are very juniors. To my mind every body (at least most of us) should have 4 qualities. First and foremost (most important, especially for doctors) is to be a good person, i.e kind, moral, ethical, think of society, country, patients, not self, be considerate, be on time, be patient in explaining matters to patients, not greedy etc. Second is that the person must be good at whatever he or she is doing, in this case good, competent, reliable doctor. Third is to be an all round person, and fourth is to be a healthy person in body, mind, social and intellectually.

For a doctor to be a good person is the most important quality and I place this quality ahead of being a good doctor. The reason for my saying this is that in Thailand those who are doctors are the brightest, most intelligent already of their years when they got into medical schools so I am not so concerned about their ability as doctors. This is because if they have their patients at heart, they should always want their patients to be cured and well which means they will study, work hard, be kind, considerate for their patients. If so, all these will make them good doctors automatically. I am certain that if they are good persons as well as good doctors they will have less chance of being sued. The goodness in one is in fact acting as immunity for that person.

I do not need to talk about being all round and healthy person but I want to talk about how to have leadership qualities or good at job.

To have leadership qualities (or good at whatever you are doing) you must have 7 qualities all of which are very important. Perhaps the most important is Vision. A leader must have vision, must be a thinker, planner, always wanting to improve, to develop self or organization further. Second, he must be good with people, have good human relationship (the human touch), be able to see the good and bad points in every person, to be able to get on with everyone from the very juniors to the most seniors, rich

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or poor (red or yellow?) and must be able to convince others to work for the organization. He must lead by good example, by “giving” himself to others and organization. Third, he must be good with money, spending money wisely, effectively, and also being able to raise money, and to invest it wisely. Fourth, is to know his/her job well, must have job description, know the policies, goals, objectives and how to get there. He must also keep his policies up to date, in line with the changing of time. Fifth, to use his time well, no time wasting i.e. by watching TV and doing exercise at the same time, reading on a plane etc. Six, he must be able to “sell” well. By “sell” I mean to write, to talk, to explain, to discuss well etc. so that others believe, and accept his reasoning. (but must be correct facts). Examples are doctors “sell” well so they pass examination or patients believe them and allow doctors to do what they want. Lastly, a leader must listen well. He must listen to every one, even though they are his juniors. But after having listened to 30 peoples, he must be able to summarize all the information and brave enough to make a (correct, I hope) decision.

On top of the 7 qualities a leader must work or study hard all his life and must be able to pick up salient points to keep up with all relevant advances in his line of work.

Well, how many of you have all these qualities?

It is never too late to learn, or improve, and it is always necessary to try to improve oneself and one’s organization. But first, one must look at, and accept, oneself or one’s organization to see weaknesses, if any.