

Featuring



Elevating Leadership Excellence – Unveiling the 7 C’s of Leadership with John Spence

By Kristin Withrow, CSDA Communications Specialist

This year’s General Manager Leadership Summit opening keynote speaker is leadership expert and author John Spence sharing his insights on what it takes to be The Leader of the Future.

Spence’s impressive career includes more than 30 years spent leading companies, working side-by-side with some of the world’s best leaders. He has amassed thousands of hours of research, and tens of thousands of surveys to distill vast quantities of data into observations with data driven, actionable advice that can be implemented at all levels of leadership.

His inspiring keynote address The Leader of the Future will have our General Manager Leadership Summit attendees taking notes, self-reflecting, and returning to their districts with new ideas and philosophies to enhance the work environment and pull the best out of every member of their team.

One of Spence’s core topics is a theoretical breakdown of the essential, non-negotiable ingredients of an effective leader. They are the 7 C’s of leadership, and every leader should reflect on their current grasp of these

characteristics with an eye toward mindful implementation of each C in the bunch.

CHARACTER

Leaders of strong character bring humble confidence and absolute integrity to their role. They are unfailingly honest with those they lead, which builds trust and respect. “A leader’s honesty is the cornerstone of their credibility and the foundation of trust,” says Spence.

COURAGE

According to Spence, seasoned leaders realize they don’t know everything and have the courage to be vulnerable. In his work with highly effective leaders around the world, he has observed them to universally be excellent at asking for input, advice, and suggestions. “Leadership demands the courage to make tough decisions, and the humility to seek guidance,” he says.

COMPETENCE

A leader doesn’t need to be a master of all roles to excel in their role as the leader. One key element to leadership is a commitment to lifelong learning and dedication to

excellence. Their pursuit of personal and professional development motivates others around them to do the same.

COMMUNICATION

It takes strong communication skills to effectively express vision, set direction, and teach. While giving direction and being expressive is key, it is balanced by the other side of the communication process: Listening. Leaders excel at asking the right questions and actively listening to answers.

COLLABORATION

“Leaders adept at collaboration attract top talent and inspire them to work towards common goals with enthusiasm and commitment,” advises Spence. Their commitment to working shoulder-to-shoulder within the team, to treating everyone as a peer, provides the space needed for the team to respond well when inevitable moments arise where the leader must assert authority.

COMPASSION

Leaders must be empathetic and understanding. They must see their employees wholly. Taking the time to know your employees ensures fairness, promotes work-life balance and acknowledgement of the value of each member of the team.

CONTRIBUTION

Strong leaders are strategic thinkers who have an eye on the horizon to make decisions that affect the organization in the long-term. They value each member’s contribution and recognize the need to build new leaders for the future and take steps to act for the good of the organization, not just themselves.

Leadership Trends in a Modern World

Spence notes, “Virtual work has had a huge impact on teams and leadership. It’s hard to create culture at a distance.” Leaders are challenged to find ways to bring people together, even virtually, to build rapport and trust in the group. The virtual divide is eased in work environments that are hybrid and still bring people physically together;

however, even fully remote teams must find ways to feel connected to be successful.

In addition, as has always been the case, generations exhibit different responses to leadership styles. Today, the younger generation has a different view of work. “Workers change companies more often because they are seeking work that is purpose driven and fulfilling,” he says. The pendulum used to be on command and control, then swung to leadership by spreadsheet. Now, it’s somewhere closer to servant leadership that embraces diversity, is network-oriented and has a leadership that earns respect and admiration from employees who feel seen and valued.

Spence’s keynote address will guide attendees through a thought-leadership journey that encourages self-reflection and goal setting. He advises leaders to raise their emotional quotient (EQ), sometimes called emotional intelligence, to set a vision for themselves. Once someone can define what type of leader they want to be, they can begin to use daily awareness to practice the behaviors necessary to hone their own 7 C’s and embody the leadership style they most want to attain.



John has been the owner or CEO of four companies and currently serves as a board member or adviser to several organizations. As a consultant and coach to organizations worldwide, from startups to the Fortune 10, John is dedicated to helping people and businesses be more successful by “Making the Very Complex... Awesomely Simple.”

***Come Listen to John Speak at the
2024 General Manager Leadership Summit***



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