



# THE CORNERSTONE EAGLE

**NOVEMBER 2020** on **EXPERT LEADERSHIP**



**CORNERSTONE**  
INTERNATIONAL  
GROUP



Leadership styles can come in many shapes and forms. It is often not one style fits all. It is more often a case of adopting a variety of styles to fit different situations. Such as one would be heading for disaster if an autocratic, 'the leader is king' style is applied no matter the situation. It would not fit situations where consensus is needed from the team, or their ideas are required, even though the final decision comes from the leader.

Successful leadership comes from the wisdom and discernment of the leader as to which leadership

style is appropriate to the situation. **However, the common threads of true leadership are AUTHENTICITY, HUMILITY, and a SERVANT'S HEART to serve.**

In this November edition of the Eagle, let us explore the **EXPERT POWER type of leadership**. This form of leadership is coming very much to the forefront as Key Opinion Leaders or KOLs, and Subject Matter Experts and etc. **More later...**

**Do Well and Do Good is the Mission of Cornerstone International Group.** The Cornerstone Eagle newsletter is a tool to inspire you to maximize your personal and professional potential to be a Better Leader and a Better Person both at home and at business. We shall be your Faithful Companion / Coach / Mentor on your life and career journey, supporting you to discover yourself and offering good advice for 'Healthier Business and Life'.

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**Cornerstone International Group is a global executive search & workforce enhancement group.** Founded in 1989 and a global member of the Association of Executive Search and Leadership Consultants (**AESC**), Cornerstone was also named by **Forbes** and **HuntScanlon** as a global group that has one of the highest quality level in the industry. With some 60 offices worldwide, our global reach plus local experience & ownership mindset helps our clients to do well around the world.

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## Expert Power

### Earn Respect by Developing Expertise

Expert power is a great asset to have.

It provides leaders with a robust power base from which they can manage people confidently. It is more important than reward-based or coercive power in leading people effectively. If you have expert power, your team is likely to be more open to your efforts to guide them, and you'll find it easier to motivate them to perform to their full potential.



Expert power can also help you to get noticed, which allows you to craft a higher-profile role. It can help you to build up your own personal brand and increase your influence and reputation at work. But remember that you will need to constantly develop those skills and knowledge to keep hold of that expert power.

## How to Build Expert Power

Building expertise is no easy feat. It can be a time-consuming task, but, ultimately, it's a worthwhile one. Research has shown that it can take at least a decade to build up expertise. Some argue that it takes as much as 10,000 hours of deliberate practice to become world-class at something.

In fact, maintaining expert power is a lifelong commitment, so you will need to refresh and update your knowledge continuously if you wish to remain the go-to expert in your field.

However, remember that it's not enough just to build expertise. People have to recognize your skills and to acknowledge that they need what you have. You can achieve this by following these 7 key steps:



### 1. Promote an Image of Expertise

Perceived expertise is often associated with education and experience, so make sure that colleagues know about your formal education, work experience, and accomplishments.

You could display diplomas, licenses and awards in your office, or refer subtly to your prior education or experience at an appropriate moment. For example, "We had a similar problem when I was chief engineer at GE, and we found..." Be careful, however, not to overplay this tactic, as it could backfire if people think that you are bragging.

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## 2. Maintain Credibility

Once you have established your expertise, it's important to protect your position. It's all too easy to lose credibility, so avoid making careless comments about subjects that you're poorly informed on, and take care to distance yourself from projects that have a low likelihood of success.

## 3. Act Confidently and Decisively in a Crisis

People like a leader who knows how to direct them when there's a problem. They'll likely associate confident, firm leadership with expert knowledge. So, even if you're unsure of the best way forward, try not to express doubts or appear confused. But best of all, be prepared for a crisis so that your confidence is well founded!

## 4. Keep Informed

Having a firm grasp of up-to-date facts and figures is essential if you want to build and maintain your expert power. It's crucial to stay well informed about developments within your team and your organization, as well as within your wider industry.

Expand your professional network to include high-quality connections rather than collecting a large number of passing contacts. Take the time to read relevant books, articles, journals, and blog posts, and attend conferences and events. Do whatever it takes to keep your "finger on the pulse."

## 5. Recognize People's Concerns and Contributions

Being an expert means that people look to you for information and direction, but this doesn't mean that your engagement with others is one-sided. Listen carefully to your colleagues' concerns and make sure that you address their questions. Try holding learning or discussion groups with your team to exchange and expand your knowledge.

## 6. Avoid Threatening People's Self-Esteem

Being an expert can create competition or conflict with the people who need to access your knowledge. Generally, people don't like to have their status unfavorably compared with others', particularly when the gap is large and obvious. They will likely be upset by an expert who acts in a superior way, and flaunts his or her expertise.

Avoid this pitfall by making sure that you demonstrate your expertise tactfully and take care to guard against arrogance. Make sure that you carefully avoid triggering negative and damaging reactions from the rest of your team.

## 7. Sharing Your Expertise

Be generous with your knowledge and seek out opportunities to help people to grow.



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As others begin to recognize your unique, valuable expertise, they'll naturally want to tap into it. Equally, you'll spot opportunities to support them that they may not even be aware of. Your expert power can help to enable co-workers to develop their own skills, so that they can progress in their careers, as you have in yours.

**Remember, the more you invest in helping the people around you, the more your professional value will grow and the more powerful your position can become.**

## Food for Thought from the Bible

### Matthew 20:26

It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your **servant**.

### Isaiah 41:10

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will **strengthen you and help you**; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.



*Our Editor, Kuang Fu at [kuang-fu@cornerstone-group.com](mailto:kuang-fu@cornerstone-group.com) would love to hear from you if you have special thoughts to share.*

### About Cornerstone International Group

**Cornerstone International Group** is a Global Talent Consultancy Group founded in 1989 with some 60 offices worldwide and headquarters in Shanghai, China and Atlanta, USA. Our **mission** is to accelerate the success of our clients by providing top-quality consulting services in the field of talent recruitment and coaching solutions that are **faster, better and at a value** that serves our clients locally and globally. We provide a proven approach to Executive Search, Executive Coaching and Board Solutions in China, Asia and across Europe and Americas. A global member of the Association of Executive Search and Leadership Consultants (AESC), **Cornerstone** is recognized as having the highest level of quality in the industry. Cornerstone is also named by Forbes as one of the Best Management Consulting Firms in Executive Search in 2016, 2017 & 2018, 2019 and ranked by Hunt Scanlon as top Global 25 groups in 2018-2020.

