

# Servant Leadership: Good for You & Good for Your Organization

By A. Ronald Berryman



*Berryman & Company*  
*Management Consultants*

Although simple in concept, Servant Leadership flips our idea about conventional leadership: **it's about serving others to lead effectively, rather than leading so others can serve us.**

The idea and concept of Servant Leadership began in 1970 with the publication of the essay, "The Servant as Leader" by Robert Greenleaf. In this essay, Greenleaf emphasized that leadership is not about power, but about being a servant.

Servant Leaders do have certain characteristics that benefit the individual and the organization. Those characteristics can be developed, but once developed, must also be cultivated in order to bear fruit within the Servant Leader's life and organization. Servant Leadership is a choice and if you choose to lead this way, you derive some valuable personal benefits. But Servant Leadership does not just make you a better person. It is also a leadership style that can benefit your organization's shareholders and customers, as well as enhance market competition.

### » Ready to Benefit From Servant Leadership in Your Organization?

Don't just learn about Servant Leadership. Put it into practice. You can have all the help you need to develop the attributes and skills of a Servant Leader in yourself or your organization - and reap the benefits of growth and improved business results.

**Simply contact A. Ronald Berryman at [ron@berrymanandcompany.com](mailto:ron@berrymanandcompany.com)**

Ron Berryman is a featured Servant Leader facilitator, keynote speaker, professor and certified management consultant. He is available to address or work with your board, provide training sessions or lectures, or coach one-on-one.

He has helped non-profit organizations, businesses, schools, boards and government agencies. He's a resource that will make the difference in your organization.

**Contact Ron today to learn more:**

**Ron Berryman** | ☎ 909.599.7430 | ✉ [ron@berrymanandcompany.com](mailto:ron@berrymanandcompany.com)

**Member of:**



## » Characteristics of a Servant Leader

---

Servant Leaders are identifiable by certain characteristics, including the commitment to listen, to empathize, to look at the big picture in any situation, to communicate clearly and to grow community. Any one of those characteristics would be seen as important in the service to others. But when they are all consistently demonstrated by an individual, that individual becomes a leader.

Every characteristic of a Servant Leader can be developed. Once developed, and put into practice, the Servant Leader gains the trust of others, which leads to inspiring followers. Inspired followers are the key to transforming your organization.

To better understand the characteristics of Servant Leadership, consider the example of a coach and a sports team. A coach sees the team, but also perceives the differences in the players. A coach works to use those differences to create unity. Servant Leaders value the individual just as coaches do. They know how to listen and when to listen to both the individual player, as well as to the team. They pay attention to non-verbal cues, learning to evaluate and read them. Servant Leaders, like coaches, don't do the job of the players. Rather, they view the play from a clear vantage point to understand what each individual team member brings to the organization. They communicate clearly what needs to be done, provide the resources for the players to execute the direction, and take pride in a team effort.

## » How Servant Leadership Benefits You

---

Clearly, Servant Leadership benefits businesses, non-profit organizations and public sector entities. Just look at Southwest Airlines, TDIndustries, Starbucks, the March of Dimes and the American Heart Association, which are all servant-led business. But how does Servant Leadership benefit you as an individual?

**If you are a designated leader in a business, have goal responsibility for an organization or are a board member of a non-profit, ask yourself if you feel any of the following:**

- That you carry the weight of the organization on your shoulders
- That you have lost the joy in coming to work or participating in the group
- That you feel out of the communication loop

**Did you answer "YES" to any of the above?**

**Developing yourself as a Servant Leader can make all the difference.**

If responsibilities for your organization are constantly weighing you down, you are probably trying to do more yourself rather than leading others to accomplish goals. If you have lost the joy in participating in the organization, you may be shutting yourself away from individual interaction and mentorship. If you feel out of the loop regarding communication, you may not be actively soliciting input from and listening to individuals within your organization. By putting into practice the characteristics of Servant Leadership, you can remedy each of these situations.

## » How Servant Leaders Benefit the Organization

---

Servant Leadership makes the difference for all organizations: non-profit, for-profit and public sector. In the non-profit environment, Servant Leaders are effectively able to inspire others to voluntary action. In the for-profit organization, Servant Leaders build teams that sustain competitive differentials. In the public sector, Servant Leaders are able to transform multiple personal agendas into collaborative action for good.

While Servant Leaders may appear to be in the foreground, they are actually background figures. Their actions build a strong, dexterous backbone for the organization because the success of the organization is dependent upon the individuals guided by the Servant Leaders, not by the Servant Leaders themselves.

Servant Leaders stay in the background in order to have an overall view of the organization. From this vantage point, they have the flexibility to step away to see a larger picture or to step in to become more completely involved. Either way, it is from this position that Servant Leaders are able to recognize energies, ideas, and influences.

From this understanding, Servant Leaders are able to push individuals forward, thus also pushing the organization forward. The symbiotic relationship between the Servant Leader and the individuals within the organization creates an interdependence that enables appropriate reactions to a constantly changing business environment and market competition.

## » How to Put Servant Leadership Into Action

---

Consider the theory of Servant Leadership in practice. When you are friendly and polite to an individual in your organization, you create a warm environment in which to build good rapport. By listening to the individual, you show you are approachable, and in turn, encourage others in your organization. By getting to know these individuals, you get a clear and deep understanding of the inner workings of your organization. From this comes understanding about what needs to be fixed, and what talents each individual has that can be applied to the solution. When you clearly communicate what needs to be done, and by whom, you initiate collaboration by a group, which results in teamwork. The team delivers the solution, and the resulting outcome is shared by the team. This builds a workforce that is loyal to the organization and its Servant Leaders, helping to transform the organization (even in small ways) into something better than what previously had existed.

Servant Leadership is a long-term, transformative approach to life and work. It begins with the individual who wants to help another person do better, remedy a situation or achieve a goal. It is not easy; in fact it requires sacrificing much of what we hold dear – our time, our energy and our personal agendas. But when put into action, Servant Leadership has valuable benefits for the leader, the organization and the organization's stakeholders and customers.



## About Ron Berryman

---

If you want to establish servant leadership in your organization, embed it into your thinking, or integrate it into your life, Ron Berryman can show you how to do it.

Ron is a servant leader with keen insight into the issues that challenge organizations, and the business experience to help you enhance productivity and encourage change. He leveraged his laudable career in management and business affairs to establish Berryman & Company, and continues to be a valued resource to the Pepperdine University Board and the Board of Visitors at the Graziadio School of Business and Management, as well as other government entities, non-profits, businesses and boards.

For more about Ron's credentials as a Servant Leader and certified management consultant, please visit [www.Berrymanandcompany.com](http://www.Berrymanandcompany.com)

## Servant Leader Experience

---

Learn from Ron Berryman, an experienced Servant Leader, who has been instrumental in the success of these organizations:

- » Progress Investment Management Co. – *CFO/COO*
- » Computer Sciences Corp. – *Chief of Financial Planning*
- » NBC West Coast Operations – *Administrator of Business Affairs and TV Production*
- » March of Dimes, Los Angeles – *Board Chairman*
- » Pepperdine University Board
- » Kedren Head Start – *Board Chairman*
- » Kedren Community Mental Health Center – *Vice Board Chairman*
- » United Negro College Fund, Los Angeles – *Executive Council*
- » Institute of Management Consultants – *Past President, So. California Chapter*
- » Exit Planning Institute – *Board of Governors*
- » Crespi Carmelite High School – *Board of Directors*
- » State of California Small Business Development Board – *Policy Making Board*
- » California Senate Select Committee on Small Business – *Advisory Committee*

## About Berryman & Company

With 30+ years of success counseling and providing business solutions to hundreds of businesses, charitable boards, academic institutions and industry, Berryman & Company is considered a trusted resource for business development. Services include executive coaching, exit planning, human capital development, strategic planning and marketing planning. From AT&T (PAC-Bell), Occidental Petroleum, the City of Los Angeles and UCLA, to the Veterans Administration, the Department of Labor, the Urban League and Young Saints, Inc., the Berryman track record of successful business consulting results is testament in itself.

---

### SOURCES:

Greenleaf, R. *Servant Leadership*, Paulist Press, 1977

Frick, Don and Sipe, James. *Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership; Practicing the Wisdom of Leading by Serving*. Paulist Press, 2009

Greenleaf, Robert. *The Power of Servant Leadership*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 1998

Spears, L. C. "Tracing the Past, Present, and Future of Servant-Leadership." *In Focus On Leadership: Servant-Leadership for the Twenty-first Century* (pp. 1-10). John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 2002

Spears, Larry. *Focus on Leading. Servant Leadership for the 21st Century*. Wiley, 2001