



## ***Be a Chore-leader, Not Just a Cheerleader***

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Someone once told me the most important leadership quality is enthusiasm. I see this point reinforced at many of the leadership conferences I speak at for teenagers. During the opening session, students are led in songs and cheers. The MC will do a "roll call," asking each school to shout out if they're in the house. They play the "Let's Get Ready to Rumble" song and the whole crowd explodes to its feet. Before too long, the meeting room is shaking with cheers. It's an awesome experience - for those in the room.

Back at school no one cares. Whatever problems the leaders left behind are still there. And when they return, all their cheers and enthusiasm won't change a thing.

Enthusiasm is important to open minds and create energy. But ultimately, someone's gotta do something. If you really want to make a difference for others, you've got to be more than a cheerleader; you have to be a "chore-leader," someone who does the chores - the work necessary to make things better.

This in no way is a criticism of cheerleaders. Their spirit makes the game more fun, and creates an environment for players to succeed. But their enthusiasm would be pointless without something to cheer for.

We need people willing to take the knocks and do something of substance. I recently read an article about a group of volunteer medical students from UCLA who donate what little free time they have to running a free mobile health clinic for the homeless in Los Angeles. These are extremely busy people who still make time to do something good (the "chores") for the community. These spirited med students don't just wear UCLA sweatshirts. They actively represent the school in a way that makes the world better. I've always been proud to be a graduate of UCLA, but when I read that article, I felt honored to share the same alma mater. Because of their leadership, I now wear my college sweatshirt with a little more pride.

Nothing creates enthusiasm like someone actually doing something big and important. Those are the ones we call heroes. And when you think of a "hero's welcome," you probably imagine an incredibly loud, festive gathering. Schools with the most spirit usually have the most successful sports teams. While the spirit helps the team, usually the spirit is a result of the team already doing well. The more effort put out, the more support others give.

So do your chores, and you'll earn the cheers.

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