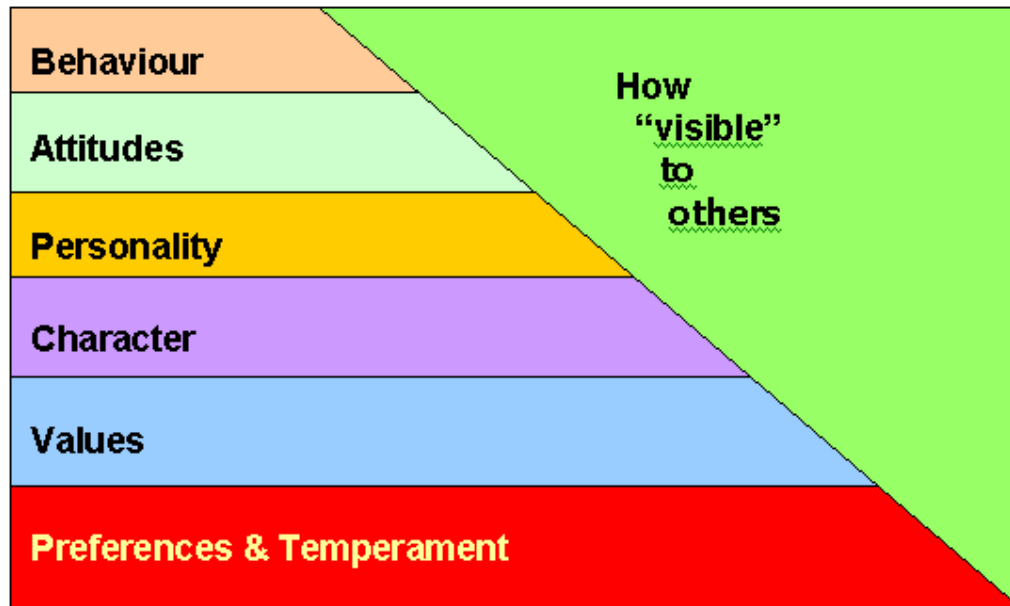


## Leadership Perspective: Training & Mentoring Leaders

So are leaders made or born? Good questions and I believe the final jury is still out on this one, although certain preferences equip some people to be able to develop and use certain styles of leadership better than others (see the initial articles in this series detailing "styles" of leadership and their affect on climate). These traits are set innately - from birth.

Next comes nurture, where values and character are formed and from which our personality begins to be evident through our attitudes. It is our attitudes, more than anything else that influences our outward and visible behaviour and thus our success as a leader.



People follow authentic leaders in whom they "sense" the character and values and ultimately the preferences or temperament that drive them.

It is sadly evident that more of the training budget goes to the front-line staff than managers and that the smallest, if any budget is set aside to develop those already leaders and those aspiring to the role.

It seems unnecessary to write the obvious and that is that without appropriate time and adequate budget, leadership development is not possible. The day-to-day business pressures squeeze out the critical need for leadership development.

Appropriate and sensible training has been proven to be one of the greatest influences on staff longevity and loyalty, even with leaders. Leader longevity is estimated to be around 18 months and attrition in these ranks is as high, if not higher than agent attrition, yet a relatively unheard of issue.

For leaders, training must be of the highest quality and cover both "soft" and technical skills. Another avenue is "on-the-job-training", much like an apprenticeship. Most of our most successful leaders today have come up the ranks and have a healthy appreciation for all aspects of the operation. And certainly, even with formal education and training, some time serving in the ranks takes the "I-know-it-all-I-read-it-in-a-book-or-someone-told-me-about-this" expert-edge off new, would-be leaders.

Once a new leader is in place, having a strong mentoring program allows for continuing development of those interested in expanding their responsibilities. A great "by-product" of mentoring is business continuity -- having developing people as back up for your positions and activities. Mentoring also provides an opportunity to evaluate a "mentees" potential in another role.

***Read about the author, Darlene D. Richard, at [www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm](http://www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm)***