

FERTILE SOIL



Sonoma County, CA | 2020 © Alicia Kae Miller

A scrappy kid to this day, I have never been one in search of motivation.

So when *of age* came knocking, this then kid, in search of inspiration, was packed in a flash and ready to leave farm country for the grand adventure that is adulthood.

Ahhh, to be eighteen again! If you are like me, you might not have been in such a hurry to get out of tumbleweed town and would have stuck around the alfalfa fields for a little while longer, *but I digress*.

After thirty-plus years in the workforce, leaders who have inspired me were few and far between, while

leaders who did not are too many to count.

When I reflect upon what I call "leading leaders" (since we are all leaders in our own right), leadership that inspired were unapologetically authentic. By default, their genuineness allowed others to be true to themselves as well.

While leading leaders often become vastly successful through a take-no-prisoners approach to business, in my experience, they *never* forget where they come from. As Maya Angelou wisely points out, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

And there it is.

Inspired leaders stay deeply rooted in the principle of *people-first* mentality. Through the cultivation of **respect** and two-way dialogue, the seeds of lasting relationships are sown and reap inspiration regardless of the season. If appropriately applied, the following elements go the distance toward barren-proofing connection to one another:

Respect.

Leaders who make it all worthwhile regularly acknowledge your presence.

When someone treats you with dignity, the playing field levels. Being recognized is paramount to self-

respect and incentivizes loyalty.

Trust.

Leaders who let you shine without trying to dim your light.

You were hired for your expertise and knowledge. Being treated as a valuable team member goes a long way toward assuring self-confidence and garnering innovation.

Gratitude.

Leaders who actively highlight your contributions.

We are human, and as such, appreciate some level of acknowledgment for a job well done. Receiving credit through public announcements, be it internal or external, uplifts, and stimulates motivation.

So, there you have it.

There are many more motivational leadership attributes, but the highlights above are foundational elements that inspire leaders to become leading leaders.

The bottom line = being valued for who you are and what you bring to the table is priceless.

What are you doing as a leader to positively grow relationships that promote longevity?

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Yours in Solidarity, -akm

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