Let’s explore the five practices as they relate to all kinds of leaders:

1. Model the Way

Leaders who model the way, exhibit two key behaviors. They “Clarify their Values” and “Set an Example”. Their actions are aligned with their values. When Jolie, one of the sexiest women in the world, announced that she had a double mastectomy and wanted to use her experience as a teachable moment to help other women, it was a powerful example of modeling the way.

2. Inspire a Shared Vision

Kouzes and Posner identify “Envisioning the Way” and “Enlisting Others” as two ways leaders can inspire a shared vision. Bill and Melinda Gates immediately come to my mind. They’ve established for their foundation a clear vision focusing on five areas: Global Development, Global Health, U.S. programs, Global Policy and Advocacy. They’ve also convinced other wealthy people, such as warren Buffet, to donate part of their fortune to their foundation.

3. Challenge the Process

How many of you reading this blog have an iPhone, iPad or Apple computer? Or perhaps the devices you use are enabled by the technology Apple developed. The transformation in technology wouldn’t be available if Steve Jobs had not “Searched for Opportunities” and “Experimented and Taken Risks”—two behaviors of exemplary leaders.

4. Enable Others to Act

Nelson Mandela, the iconic South African leader, exemplifies this. By “Fostering Collaboration” and “Strengthening Others,” he was able to successfully lead South Africa through the dismantling of apartheid while encouraging racial reconciliation.

5. Encourage the Heart

Leaders encourage the heart by “Recognizing the Contributions of Others” and by “Celebrating the Use of Values and Victories”. When thinking about his practice, I glanced at the Mighty Mouse trophy I won during one of my favorite jobs. I have long forgotten the accomplishment we celebrated, but I clearly remember the spirit of community and appreciation I felt when I won the award.

How about you? Can you think of a leader, friend, peer or family member who exhibits one of more of the practices of Exemplary Leadership?