

Dear Hiring Team:

As I reflect on my career leading teams and organizations, the most important leadership lesson I have learned is to listen first and ask questions second.

Throughout my career at Schwab, Infinite IO, ServiceNow, FICO, and earlier as a Principal Engineer at Micron, my greatest successes have come from understanding before acting. By listening to stakeholders, customers, and team members, I have been able to identify opportunities to modernize software architectures, improve processes, and achieve more with existing resources. I rely on testing, demonstrations, and measurable results to validate direction and ensure we are solving the right problems.

I have also learned that successful technology leadership requires understanding not only what we are building, but why we are building it. By engaging with business leaders and stakeholders, I gain clarity on organizational goals and strategy. This allows me to align engineering efforts with business objectives and provide teams with a clear vision of where we are going and how their work contributes to that mission.

Building strong relationships is a critical part of my leadership approach. Through regular one-on-one meetings, I seek to understand challenges, remove roadblocks, and help people succeed. Mentorship has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my career, and I have had the privilege of helping individuals across engineering, business, sales, and customer service organizations grow their careers and advance into new leadership and technical roles.

This approach has also driven meaningful business outcomes. At FICO, I improved the interview process by sponsoring an interview management platform that saved hundreds of hours while improving candidate screening. I also partnered with the QA organization to implement a replacement testing platform at less than half the cost of the existing solution. At Infinite IO, ServiceNow, and FICO, I worked closely with customers to understand their challenges and assembled the right teams to deliver effective solutions.

Ultimately, leadership is about enabling others to succeed. By understanding the strengths of my team members and placing them in positions where they can make the greatest impact, I help create both organizational success and individual growth opportunities.

Finally, I believe leadership without integrity is ineffective. Trust is the foundation of every successful team. By listening, empowering others, continuously improving our processes and technology, and leading with integrity, organizations can achieve lasting success while fulfilling their mission.

Thank you for this opportunity to explain my leadership philosophy.

-- Dave Burton

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