ATATURK

Lessons in Leadership from the Greatest general of the Ottoman Empire

Austin Bay

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Mustafa kemal Ataturk was an inspiring military general and a visionary leader. As the Ottoman empire crumbled, he fought to protest his homeland, and out of the empire's ashes he created the modern nation of Turkey.

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Probably no other 20 th century leader did more for his country than Mustafa kemal Ataturk. He brought Turkey independence, changed its alphabet and culture, and created a secular democracy.

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His mother expected him to be educated in the classical Islam with the Koran, but young Mustafa felt at an early age that he was destined to be a soldier and pursued a western education.

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He studied assiduosly, impressed mentors,schemed for the best assignments.

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He had many qualities his contemporaries lacked : First, he had a broader vision;second he was incredibly determined,to the point of arrogance,and almost without personal regard for his popularity. Third he was a good judge of people.

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He could lead, plan, negotiate,compromise .He could brief privately and speak publicly.

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His presence changed everything

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Kemal means perfect in Turkish and Ataturk always was neatly dressed and groomed, very fastidious about this aspect.

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Kemal understood the power of oratory. His legendary all night debates in bars and his speeches as president before the grand national assembly demonstrate his verbal aptitude and persuasive intensity, informally and formally

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Kemal understood the power of words, images, symbols and symbolic behaviour and insisted his officers dress well. Personal carriage , discipline and intellectual preparation affected perceptions.

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The surrender of Salonika saw a different side of Ataturk. He was tough in his review.He saw an army riddled with ill prepared,unreflective leaders who instead of building trust between leaders and sub ordinates, used discord as a management tool.Ataturk saw little commitment to military professionalism, leaders were looking at rank for higher pay and not for increased responsibility or being an effective leader.

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When Turkey became free, Kemal spoke to an audience in a theatre, an impromptu speech : Citizens bear responsibilities, subjects do not, you are Turkish citizens , not ottoman subjects, free citizens must square the circle that freedom is not free, and uncertainty and imperfect outcomes always are around the corner to face.

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He was an advocate of freeing women politically. If women do not share in the social life of the nation, we will never attain our full development and we can never be on par with other civilizations.

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If a society is content to meet the contemporary requirements with only men,that society loses more than half its strength.

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Kemal insisted on political freedom for women in the 1920s. He argued that modernity required creativity and vitality. A creative and productive people needed education.

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Ataturk believed that reason and logic provide the foundation for common values that all nations and cultures may share and respect. He saw an ideal that commands respect but more than respect, it empowers.

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He was Turkeys first president from 1923-1938. He introduced the new Turkish alphabet in 1928.

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Ataturk had a far reaching influence because of what he achieved. Roads , memorials and squares are named after him in Delhi, Dhaka, Pakistan, Australia, new Zealand(he defeated them in war at galipoli),Italy, Amsterdam

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