

Beekun and Badawi (1999: 22-25) explicated the different layers of the moral character and personality of a leader and a follower:

- 1) At the core of Islamic moral character is *iman* or faith in Allah. *Iman* implies belief in the Oneness of Allah (*tawhid* - monotheism) and the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*). An individual with strong *iman* will consider himself and all his possessions as belonging to Allah. He will bow his ego, his likes, his passions, and his thinking before Allah. He will obey the injunctions of Allah and His Prophet without hesitation. *Iman* also implies beliefs in the *akhirah* (the next life), and in one's ultimate accountability for one's deeds. A leader with firm *iman* will not dodge responsibility for his actions, and will be cautious about any directives, that he gives to his followers.
- 2) Building upon *iman*, Islam is the second layer of the moral personality of an Islamic leader and followers. The term Islam comes from the Arabic root SLM which means peace and submission. Islam means the achievement of peace with Allah, within oneself and with the creation of Allah, through willing submission to Him.
- 3) *Taqwa*. As an individual submits to Allah through Islam, he or she develops an awe of Allah. *Taqwa* is an all-encompassing, inner consciousness of one's duty toward Him and the awareness of one's accountability towards Him.
- 4) *Ihsan*. Whereas *taqwa* is the fear of Allah and the feeling of Allah's presence, *ihsan* is the love of Allah. This love of Allah motivates the individual Muslim to work toward attaining Allah's pleasure.

Khan (2007) collated his own list of Islamic leadership principles which are as follows:

1. Faith and Belief

Faith lays the foundation of greatness and success and nothing happens unless one believes in its happening. One of the greatest qualities commonly shared by all great leaders who ever lived was their strong faith and belief in higher entity, in themselves or their leadership. This is the spirit which drives a person towards greater heights.

2. Knowledge and Wisdom

Leadership is a great responsibility and to fulfil this important duty the leaders must continuously acquire knowledge. There are numerous Quranic verses that encourage human beings to seek knowledge and wisdom.¹ Knowledge is power and any leader who wishes to excel his/her leadership prowess must acquire knowledge. Wisdom or *hikmah* in Arabic is one of the most admired, ancient, recurring and popular attributes credited to great leaders. Knowledge, however, is not necessarily wisdom. It is an elusive as God grants wisdom to whoever He pleases.² It is defined as an excellent discernment, discretion, intelligence, penetration of ideas, correctness of opinion, quickness of understanding, and clarity of mind which leads to correct action and decisions.

3. Courage and Determination

Courage and determination emanate from strong faith and belief and the complete satisfaction of one's righteousness. Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, cousin and son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*), advised his governor to, "avoid haste in all affairs before their proper time or laxity about them when they can be (promptly) dealt with, persisting in them when they are found to be undesirable or showing weakness about them when they are clear and manifest (Jafri, 2009:69).

4. Mutual Consultation (*Shura*) and Unity

Mutual consultation is a Quranic command³ and is listed with other key virtues such as performing prayers and spending for the sake of God. The Prophet Muhammad himself practiced this value and in almost all important matters consulted his colleagues and companions. A positive outcome from mutual consultation is that followers are satisfied that their opinions are sought after and taken into consideration by the leader, and this would initiate unity among them.

5. Morality and Piety

Morality and Piety are emphasized for all believers, but especially for leaders as their morality and piousness must serve as an example for his followers. Muslims are to take a leaf from the Prophet Muhammad's exemplary moral character that he earned the title 'Al-Amin (The Trustworthy) in Mecca even before being appointed by God to Prophethood. His companions also religiously practiced morality and piety. In his first speech as Khalifah of the Muslims, Abu Bakar Siddiq proved himself as an ideal of modesty and humility. In his speech, he said:

¹ (Qur'an, Al-Zumar, 39:9) "Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endowed with understanding that receive admonition".

² (Quran, Al-Baqarah, 2: 26)..By it He causes many to stray, and many He leads into the right path; but He causes not to stray, except those who forsake (the path).

³ (Quran: Al-Shura, 42: 38) "Those who hearken to their Lord, and establish regular Prayer; who (conduct) their affairs by mutual Consultation who spend out of what We bestow on them for Sustenance.

“I have been appointed a ruler over you even though I am not the best among you. I have never sought this position nor there has been a desire in my heart to have this in preference to anyone else. If I do right, you must help and obey me, if I go astray, set me aright...obey me as long as I obey Allah and His Messenger. If I disobey them, then you have no obligation to follow me.”

6. Superior Communication

A leader must be extremely good in communication and be eloquent and articulate. This is required so as to communicate the purpose, mission, vision, and goals of an organisation. Providing information, coaching followers, motivating teams towards excellence and achievement requires good communicative skills.

7. Justice and Compassion

Justice without compassion may lead to tyranny, while compassion without justice creates anarchy. A leader needs to maintain a careful balance to keep the overall good of society in mind. An Islamic leader must combine the two in his personality.

8. Patience and Endurance

Patience is yet another hallmark of great leadership. God has special praises for those who imbue himself with this quality of patience and endurance. This includes the capacity to endure, to persevere in the face of inevitable resistance, difficulty, and even opposition in the struggle to bring about improvement of social condition. Almost all of the Prophets had to face great tribulations in their lives and patience and endurance are the keys for them to survive them and emerge as winners.

9. Commitment and Sacrifice

Commitment may be defined as ‘an attitude of people for deploying their total resources towards the achievement of certain goals. With total commitment comes the spirit of personal sacrifices. Those lives of the Prophets and the Companions showed great testimonies of how simple they lived their lives, even if the richness of the states were at their disposal. Self-interest and self-aggrandizement have never been styles.

10. Lifelong Endeavour

A true leader thus not sits idle and continuously strives towards better conditions and nobler goals. Complacency kills enterprise as well as progress which must be avoided and replaced with the zeal of continuous struggle.⁴

11. Gratitude and Prayers

Human beings owe immense gratitude towards their Creator without His blessings and power nothing can happen. Prophet Muhammad has said that Gratitude (*shukr*) for the abundance you have received is the best insurance that the abundance will continue. All great Muslim leaders who showed exemplary gratitude and offered keen prayers were successful in their endeavours and struggles.

⁴ (Quran, Al-Najm, 53: 59) “Man can have nothing but what he strives for.