



Tap the Power of Natural Leadership

By Lewis Frees PhD

There is a form of leadership that largely goes unrecognized and untapped in most organizations. This form of leadership is Natural Leadership and can be practiced by anyone from anywhere at any time. Natural leaders foster, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors in the people with whom they work that create high engagement, great patient experience and patient safety. Natural leaders:

- Make the right things matter most
- Are optimistic and have positive moods and emotions
- Trigger the best instincts of others
- Create connectivity by fostering inclusion rather than divisiveness
- Trust emergence

Most people who practice this form of leadership do not even think of themselves as leaders. They just do it. They are naturals. Usually when we think of naturals we think of people who are born with unusual or innate talent. When this talent is combined with excellent circumstances for development, people become what Malcolm Gladwell has called *Outliers*, people who stand out because of their unusual success. Name any area about which expertise is required and there are naturals who seem to have a special talent for it. Among these naturals, there are those who, thanks to life circumstances, stand out among the rest.

We all know stories of child prodigies such as Felix Mendelssohn who wrote beautiful music as a child that would ordinarily be typical of a mature composer. He had the good fortune to be born into a family that fostered, nurtured and helped him to develop the natural talent he already brought to the table. Great athletes seem to be both physically and neurologically wired for their greatness and when this is combined with an environment that encourages practice and development, the result is the Michael Jordan's and the Williams sisters of the world.

Natural leadership is different. Most have the hard wiring to do it. For many this natural ability is nurtured, fostered, developed and

“It is not the mountains that we must conquer, but ourselves.”

Sir Edmund Hillary