In the first part of this year there have been a couple situations where I noticed the major problem with an organization was not the technical part of how to manage a maintenance team. Or, for that matter, not just a maintenance team but any team trying to accomplish a particular task. This could be a manufacturing team or a facility management team, the skills and leadership practices are the same. What I am seeing is the basic lack of leadership skills.

Many people in the leadership role ask the question all the time, ‘What is the difference between leadership and management?’ Well if you don’t know the difference than you are maybe part of the problem!

Management is the practice and maybe the art of getting people to the things you want them to do, by your skill or fear of their jobs. You demand it and they perform.

Leadership is totally different. The employees want to do what you request because they respect you, trust you, and want to do a good job because they belong to the team. And, the process makes them successful as well as the entire team.

Managers are easy to find, but leaders are much more difficult to find. In my experience, managers can be trained and developed with courses and training; but true leaders are born! What I mean by this is with enough training I can teach you how to develop the skill and documentation needed to demand the proper performance of your management team. It will work well just by saying; “If you do what I demand as the ‘Boss’ then you will succeed with the organization.” This process can be very successful but is not the most pleasant for the team in the long run.

I believe true leaders are born not developed. I still think you can fine-tune the skills of a leader but the basics of their leadership skills are born with them. If you look back in your history and you found that you where the patrol leader in the Boy Scout troop, you where the leader of a school program, a leader in high school sports programs, a leader at you church committees, etc.... you get the picture I’m sure, then you are probably still a leader!
So once you realize, as I did early on in my life, that you are a born leader then I suggest you embrace it and perform with those skills to the best of your ability. You’re a natural leader, accept it, and do the best you can do.

In your business life if you are in the level of hiring new employees, look for those who have the natural born leadership abilities, you know who they are!

Good luck!