Leadership is not about personality; it’s about behavior—an observable set of skills and abilities. And when we first set out to discover what great leaders actually do when they are at their personal best, we collected thousands of stories from ordinary people—the experiences they recalled when asked to think of a peak leadership experience. Despite differences in culture, gender, age, and other variables, these “Personal Best” stories revealed similar patterns of behavior. In fact, we discovered that when leaders are at their personal best there are five core practices common to all: they Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and last but certainly not least, they Encourage the Heart.

Three decades later, The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership® model continues to prove its effectiveness as a clear, evidence-based path to achieving the extraordinary—for individuals, teams, organizations, and communities. It turns the abstract concept of leadership into easy-to-grasp Practices and behaviors that can be taught and learned by anyone willing to step up and accept the challenge to lead. As measured and validated by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)—one of the most widely used leadership assessment instruments in the world—ongoing studies consistently confirm that The Five Practices and our assessment tools are positively related to both the effectiveness of leaders and the level of commitment, engagement, and satisfaction of those that follow.