

# What Prison Taught Me About Effective Leadership

*Renowned wellness leader Coach M.D. "POWER UP" Alexander shares powerful insight gained while serving a total of 10 years in federal prison.*

ANAHEIM, CA, UNITED STATES, July 12, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Leadership is probably one of

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The key to effective leadership is always understanding that you're the ultimate servant for those who place you in the position of authority over them. It's not about dictating.”

*Coach M.D. "POWER UP" Alexander*

the most important yet misunderstood roles an individual can occupy in our society. It is a contract between leaders and followers that dictate the success of both. Leaders who effectively give direction that brings forth safety and stability for their followers are rewarded with prestige, greater economic positioning, and power. This is even more important in a setting like prison where poor leadership can be instantly detrimental to all involved.

Coach M.D. "POWER UP" Alexander has occupied jobs ranging from program coordinator to regional director in corporate surroundings, however, nothing prepared him more for those stations than what he learned in prison.

In 2007, M.D. was serving the fourth year of a 97-month federal prison sentence handed down because of an advisory role he occupied in a series of unarmed bank robberies. During that time, he had been transferred from FCI Talladega (AL) to newly opened FCI Bennettsville (SC). Due to his early arrival at FCI Bennettsville, and his proven abilities and talents, M.D. Alexander was recognized as the leader of the "Midwest Car" (prison designation for a specified group assigned by convicts). His group was composed of Black Americans from Midwest states (he being an Ohio native) which included gang members from the Gangster Disciples, Vice Lords, Black P. Stone Nation, and more. This is the equivalent of being a general of an army or CEO of a company. With so many new men being placed together in a new environment, conflict was inevitable. That inevitability reached M.D. that summer when a new member of his Midwest Car was being sought out by members of the larger Florida Car for gambling debts accumulated at another facility. The following are five things M.D. did to avoid bloodshed:

1. Gather the facts and minimize emotional reactions.

Spontaneously responding to a problem without knowing all of the facts is a recipe for disaster. M.D. could've immediately reacted to news of the threat and mobilized his men for violence, instead, he sought to gather information from key players close to the situation.

"Prison works just like any institution with branches that rotate personnel or share data. Being aware of that truth and utilizing it provides leverage, or a key advantage, in negotiating any situation," says Coach M.D. Alexander.

## 2. Communicate with your internal network.

Prison is all about people. There's nothing more important than the relationships obtained and fostered in that climate. Being able to efficiently and adequately relay information to your entire team can determine the outcome of your efforts. "If even one man is misinformed about what's going on, it could lead to a bad choice on his part that causes everyone to suffer," explains Coach M.D.

## 3. Communicate with your external network.

M.D. understood he had an advantage in the challenge that was facing him: his celly (aka cellmate) was a respected and elder member of the Florida Car who recognized M.D. as a person of integrity and intelligence. "Prison politics can be as deep, if not deeper, than civil politics. The wiser heads realize that peace is the preferred state for everyone, even though they're prepared for the worse. My celly and I didn't want that peace disturbed over the foolishness that didn't even originate in our current dwelling, so he accompanied me to the first meeting between me and the Florida Car leader," adds Coach M.D.

## 4. Check your ego at the door and do what's best for the whole (not just yourself).

There are a lot of people in prison because of pride. Whether it be another man looking at their woman, risking their life to obtain money for peer acceptance, or someone "looking at them funny", plenty of convicts made choices from the place of ego. They didn't think of how it would affect their loved ones until it was too late.

"When I met with the Florida Car leader, I was open to his perspective and needs without the barrier of defensiveness and wanting to prove who was in charge. After he gauged my attitude and intent, it brought down his defenses that enabled us to discuss peaceful solutions," shares



Picture of Coach M.D. "POWER UP" Alexander

Coach M.D.

5. Follow through with what is agreed upon and enforce it where necessary.

In prison, no one likes dealing with liars or those who do not hold up their end of an agreement. Many individuals have been on the wrong side of this equation and received the consequences, including death. "Say what you mean and mean what you say. Reputation goes a long way in most situations, especially when you're locked up. You have to become known for being a person of your word, or you'll never be able to maintain influence among your internal and external network," Coach M.D. reveals.

To learn more about Coach M.D. "POWER UP" Alexander's [story](#) and his [work](#), please visit: <https://powerupcoachingacademy.com>

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