

## 22 Vital Traits of a CEO Excerpted from How to Think Like a CEO by D.A. Benton

1. **Be secure in yourself:** No one makes you feel inferior without your consent
2. **Be in control of your attitude:** Success in business is based more on mental attitude than mental capabilities.
3. **Be tenacious:** Nothing ever happens with one letter, one telephone call, one request.
4. **Be continually improving:** Take risks. Mistakes provide some of your best learning.
5. **Be honest and ethical:** If you are careless with the truth your credibility will be jeopardized when you are telling the truth.
6. **Be sure to think before you talk:** Think fast, pause, then speak purposefully.
7. **Be silent:** Listen much more than you talk. Talk little, but say a lot in the few words that you do say.
8. **Be aware of your style:** Style does not pertain to clothes. It's about what you do in your clothes.
9. **Be gutsy:** List the things that scare you the most—then tackle your to-do list.
10. **Be humorous:** It takes guts to inject levity into serious business situations—but somebody has to do it, so it might as well be you.
11. **Be a tad theatrical:** Get comfortable with the uncomfortable. That's life at fourteen thousand feet.
12. **Be detail oriented:** The small things will always make the biggest difference.
13. **Be willing to lead:** Be worth listening to, worth believing, worth following.
14. **Be sure to fight for your people:** Be loyal downward: spread credit downward.
15. **Be certain to admit mistakes:** If you are error free you are likely effort free.
16. **Be unapologetic:** Apologies are often vain attempts people use to vindicate themselves for something they don't plan to change anyway.
17. **Be straightforward:** Everything you say or write can be done in a plain, simple manner. Just do it.
18. **Be nice:** The more power and prestige you hold the less it may seem you need to be nice. Wrong.
19. **Be inquisitive:** Ask, ask, ask, and then ask more.
20. **Be competitive:** Don't pray for an easy win in situations you are involved in. You don't learn much from success, especially easy success. You learn from the struggle.
21. **Be flexible:** Be able to stand out from the crowd while still fitting in with the crowd.
22. **Be a good storyteller:** People understand you better, remember what you say longer, find you smarter and more interesting if you use anecdotes to make your points.