

# BIG IDEA

## Humility

Do we want our leaders to exhibit this Christian virtue? Hell, no! In politics, we laud the leaders who are able to inflate themselves to proportions that dwarf their opponents. Yet we are urged to approve 'servant' leadership where the chief is the custodian of the values of the community.

In anthropological studies of tribes, the so-called 'Big Man' was the best provider who selflessly shared bounty with followers, a model that we have seen repeatedly corrupted by greedy autocrats around the world. They get away with this via a grandiosity that lends pride and identity to impoverished masses, even while it fails to fill bellies.

In the businesses of the digital era, empowered workers want leaders who understand where they can add value and where they should step back and give players the chance to have their spot in the limelight. We want leaders to be confident but know that the point of their existence is not to be better than others, but to coordinate the capabilities of all.

➔ To see Nigel Nicholson's book, *The 'I' of Leadership: Strategies for Seeing, Being and Doing* (Jossey-Bass, £18.99), go to [iofleadership.com](http://iofleadership.com)

