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## Abstract

### The Appeal of Kanzo Uchimura: A Case Study in Leadership

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Kanzo Uchimura was a thought leader in the troubled period spanning from the Meiji era to the early Showa era. The purpose of this paper is to discuss, for the sake of corporate leaders, Uchimura's appeal from multiple perspectives, and to present a useful case study in leadership.

First, I will survey the appeal of Uchimura through ten key concepts: I. Looks, II. Dialect, III. Mind, IV. Tears, V. Laughter, VI. The Pen, VII. The Ideal and Reality, VIII. The Private and the Public, IX. Convictions and Knowledge, X. Love. Then, I will explain why concepts such as the ideal (VII) and convictions (IX) are especially important in leadership theory. In sum, leaders must possess clear ideals based on convictions in order to lead organizations in a particular direction.

In order to achieve these ideals, leaders must possess the wisdom necessary for formulating a strategy in line with reality, as well as the wisdom necessary for analyzing, understanding, and explaining why one's convictions are worthy of belief, and why one's ideals are valid. In the case of Uchimura, "Belief and Knowledge" (IX) pertains to the realms of religion and philosophy. We will easily find parallels here for thinking about leaders' convictions and their critical reflections.

In any case, for the sake of ideals based on convictions, leaders must be willing to suppress private desires and the pursuit of happiness to some extent. They must also maintain a disposition that emphasizes public responsibility and duty. As we see in Efta's commentary, from Uchimura's point of view the best part of life is not found in pursuing happiness, but in duty and sacrifice. This is also the point of concept VIII, "the Private and the Public."

How, then, does one obtain a disposition that emphasizes "the public" without erasing "the private," that is, the ego? Uchimura's secret was to uphold "love" (X). That is, a leader "knows I am surrounded by infinite love," and in

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response to it, he or she becomes the subject of love. It is especially the desire to “be in this world and engage in the business of love” that enables one to be driven by a view of life that precludes ceasing “to love life.” Furthermore, it instills confidence — or at least gives birth to the prayerful longing — that one can spend his or her life as a leader who highly values the public and serves the ideal.

This, more than anything else, is the core of how modern leaders can be inspired by Kanzo Uchimura.