

# Leadership in Cinema



Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

## ELIZABETH

Submitted by: Pam McDonald ..... E-mail: [pmcdonal@blm.gov](mailto:pmcdonal@blm.gov)  
Phone: 208-387-5318  
Studio: Universal Studios..... Released: 2003  
Genre: Drama..... Audience Rating: R  
Runtime: 124 minutes

### Materials

VCR or DVD (preferred), television or projection system, Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles handouts (single-sided), notepads, writing utensils

### Objective

Students will identify Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles illustrated within Elizabeth and discuss leadership lessons learned with group members or mentors.

### Basic Plot

'The story of Elizabeth's ascendancy to the throne, the plot of the movie is full of palace intrigues, attempted assassinations and executions. The movie starts with England divided by faith, Protestant vs. Catholic. The queen, Mary Tudor has no heir and her Catholic supporters fear the succession of her half-sister Elizabeth, a Protestant. They convince the queen to have Elizabeth arrested and put in the Tower of London but the queen hesitates and eventually refuses to sign her death warrant. It is announced that the queen is pregnant but it turns out to be a tumor and she dies of it a while later. Her Catholic supporters are forced to give the throne to Elizabeth. Elizabeth's first few years are shaky as she is not versed with the art of realpolitik and "rules from the heart instead of the mind". There is also the question of her succession as she is yet unmarried and her death without heir would mean the throne falling back into Catholic hands. She has many suitors but she eventually rejects them all. And aided by Sir Francis Walsingham she manages to kill all her enemies and ascends the throne as the "Virgin Queen".'

(Synopsis from amazon.com)

## Cast of Main Characters

Cate Blanchett .....	Elizabeth
Christopher Eccleston .....	Duck of Norfolk
Joseph Fiennes .....	Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester
Richard Attenborough .....	Sir William Cecil
Geoffrey Rush.....	Sir Francis Walsingham
Kathy Burke .....	Queen Mary Tudor
James Frain .....	Alvaro de la Quadra
Fanny Ardant .....	Mary of Guise
Vincent Cassel.....	Duc d'Anjou
George Yiasoumi .....	King Philip II of Spain

## Facilitation Options

*Elizabeth* is an excellent film showing leadership conflicts of gender, power and politics. Various avenues can be pursued depending upon the facilitator's intent. At a minimum, students can identify the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles that are illustrated in the film. Students should be less concerned with how many principles they view within the film and more concerned with how the principles they do recognize can be used in their self development as a leader.

The film can be viewed in its entirety or by clip selection depending on facilitator intent and time schedules. Another method is to have the employee(s) view the film on his/her and then hold the discussion session.

### Full-film Facilitation Suggestion:

When opting for the full-film method, the facilitator should determine a good breaking point near the middle of the film.

1. Review the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles with students.
2. Advise students to document instances within the film that illustrate/violate the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles on the handout provided.
3. Break students into small discussion groups.
4. Show students *Elizabeth*.
5. Break. (Suggestion: After Elizabeth's speech to Parliament and Walsingham releases the bishops—counter approximately 58:35)
6. Begin the guided discussion.

7. Provide a short synopsis with some “ticklers” to pay attention before beginning the rest of the film.
8. Resume the film.
9. Have students discuss their findings and how they will apply leadership lessons learned to their role in wildland fire suppression. Facilitate discussion in groups that have difficulty.
10. Wrap up the session and encourage students to apply leadership lessons learned in their personal and work lives.

### Clip Facilitation Suggestion:

1. Review the Wildland Fire Leadership Value or Principle(s) targeted for discussion. (May be given or ask students to identify the value or principle being illustrated after viewing the clip.)
2. Show the clip.
3. Facilitate discussion regarding the selected clip and corresponding value and/or principle.
4. Break students into small discussion groups.
5. Have students discuss their findings and how they will apply leadership lessons learned to their role in wildland fire suppression. Facilitate discussion in groups that may have difficulty.
6. Wrap up the session and encourage students to apply leadership lessons learned in their personal and work lives.

### Possible Clip Usage:

The following clips may assist facilitators with leadership discussions. All times are approximate.

11:00 – 13:20	Elizabeth has been arrested for conspiring with Sir Thomas Wyatt (Wyatt) and others. She is pressed to confess but only pleads her innocence.
16:00 – 19:00	Elizabeth meets with Queen Mary—tells her she has nothing to confess. Mary wants Elizabeth to promise to uphold the Catholic faith. Elizabeth promises only to “act as my conscience dictates.”
40:43 – 43:27	Elizabeth meets with her advisers/counselors regarding Mary of Guise amassing French troops in Scotland and striking them before being struck.
46:51 – 49:27	Elizabeth hears of devastating loss of English troops in Scotland as well as the bishops’ lack of support and recognition of her power. She admits her mistake to Walsingham.
53:28 – 57:45	Elizabeth addresses Parliament—the bishops. Walsingham has imprisoned the six most vocal bishops.

- 1:18:05 – 1:21:01 Elizabeth tells those near there will be no more talk of marriage. She gives her “I will have one mistress here and no master!” speech.
- 1:35:10 – 1:37:31 Elizabeth learns from Sir William of Mary of Guise’s death and claims to know nothing of it. Elizabeth confronts Sir William regarding his leadership. She will follow her own opinion and wants him to retire. She designates him Lord Burghley.
- 1:47:18 – 1:48:30 Walsingham addresses the arrested Norfolk regarding what he could have been if he had the courage to be loyal.
- 1:52:36 – 1:54:03 Elizabeth counsels with Walsingham about her leadership and future.

## Mentor Suggestion

Use either method presented above. The mentor should be available to the student to discuss lessons learned from the film as well as incorporating them to the student’s leadership self-development plan.

Encouraging individuals to keep a leadership journal is an excellent way to document leadership values and principles that are practiced.

Suggest other Leadership Toolbox items that will contribute to the overall leadership development of the student.

## Film/Book Discussion:

Consider having a few students read Alan Axlerod’s **Elizabeth I CEO: Strategic Lessons from the Leader Who Built an Empire**. Lead a discussion between students who have read the book and those who watched the film. The film shows only the beginning of Queen Elizabeth’s reign; students who read the book can elaborate on later events.

## References

Axlerod, Alan. **Elizabeth I CEO: Strategic Lessons from the Leader Who Built an Empire**. Prentice Hall Press. 2000.

Hyperlinks have been included to facilitate the use of the Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program website. Encourage students of leadership to visit the [website \(https://www.fireleadership.gov/\)](https://www.fireleadership.gov/).

## Elizabeth

The following clips illustrate the Wildland Leadership Values and Principles (a support or violation of). These are only guidelines and may be interpreted differently by other views; they are presented as a guide for facilitation.

### Duty

- Elizabeth convinces Parliament to unify Catholics and Protestants into a single Church of England. (Be proficient in your job, both technically and as a leader.)
- Elizabeth entertains suitors and considers marrying Duc d'Anjou but backs out when she sees the union would reap few benefits for herself or England. (Develop contingencies and consider consequences.)
- Elizabeth denounces men in her life by saying, "I will have one mistress here and no master!" (Take charge when in charge.)
- The Pope attempts to absolve Elizabeth of her power and have her killed. (Develop a plan to accomplish given objectives.)
- Queen Elizabeth retires Sir William when his leadership decisions and course of action clash with her own. (Consider individual skill levels and development needs when assigning tasks.)

### Respect

- Elizabeth ruled with passion and conviction. She claimed she married England. (Take care of your subordinate's needs.)
- Elizabeth presents her argument about unifying Catholics and Protestants into a single Church of England. (Keep your subordinates informed.)
- Bishops send young men to war with Scotland. (Violation: Consider team experience, fatigue and physical limitations when accepting assignments.)
- Elizabeth spares Lord Robert Dudley's life to remind her of how close she came to danger and Arundel because of his kindness when she was imprisoned; all others were executed. (Apply disciplinary measures equally.)
- The Church of England lacks the Virgin Mary icon. Elizabeth's subjects need an icon. (Observe human behavior.)

### Integrity

- Elizabeth promises Queen Mary that she will act as her conscience dictates when she comes to power. (Keep your superiors informed of your actions.)
- Queen Elizabeth asks her counselors whether she should attack Mary of Guise in Scotland. (Actively listen to feedback from your subordinates.)

- Queen Elizabeth recognizes her mistake in going to war with Scotland. (Don't show discouragement when facing set backs. Accept full responsibility for and correct poor team performance.)
- Elizabeth trusts Walsingham as he was the only one to tell her not to go to war. (Credit subordinates for good performance.)
- While Norfolk is being arrested, Walsingham tells Norfolk that he was the most powerful man in England but could have been greater still if only he had the courage to be loyal and not been so vain. (Choose the difficult right over the easy wrong.)

## Elizabeth

### Guided Discussion – Possible Answer

1. Elizabeth was well educated. How important is continual learning for successful leadership development?
  - **Answers will vary.**
  - **The Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program believes in the term *students of fire*. Individuals are encouraged to participate in all aspects of the program including, but not limited to items available through the [Leadership Toolbox](#).**
2. Queen Mary ruled with a heavy, bloody hand whereas her half-sister Elizabeth ruled with compassion and conviction. Which leadership style worked best?
  - **Answers will vary.**
  - **Discussion may revolve around the length of rule and the respect the English subjects had for each woman.**
3. What made Elizabeth such a successful leader?
  - **Answers will vary.**
  - **Surrounded herself with skillful advisers—from the past and her own.**
  - **Well-educated.**
  - **Loyal to subjects.**
  - **Refer to Axelrod's book—136 strategic lessons.**
4. What seems to be Elizabeth's commander's intent when she assumes power?
  - **Unification of the Catholics and Protestants into a single Church of England with a common prayer book and purpose—an act of uniformity.**
5. How important are alliances as a leader? What advantages and disadvantages did you observe from alliances that were made or not entered into during this film? How did Mary and Elizabeth differ in their opinion of alliances with foreigners?

- **Answers will vary.**
  - **Advantages: Less conflict, means by which to extend power and influence**
  - **Disadvantages: Loss of control, less ability to look out for one's subjects, intensified political unrest**
  - **Mary did not really care about the consequences that the alliances she formed affected her subjects. Elizabeth put her subjects first and foremost.**
6. Who seems to be a major contributor to Queen Elizabeth's success as a leader? Discuss your answer.
- **Answers may vary.**
  - **Sir Francis Walsingham seems to be Queen Elizabeth's most loyal adviser and protector. Although he took matters into his own hands on occasion, he did so with the intent to promote Queen Elizabeth and secure the protestant faith in England.**
7. One of Elizabeth's biggest leadership challenges was being a woman in a male-dominated society. How does this compare with the wildland fire culture? Discuss challenges that women may encounter in leadership positions within the wildland fire service.
- **Answers will vary.**
  - **This culture is similar to that of the wildland fire service. Wildland firefighting has a predominately male firefighting force.**
  - **Answers will vary but may include discrimination and lack of respect from subordinates. Ensure that students do not use names and discuss EEO—"Do What's Right." Gender should not be a factor that determines leadership success. Refer to the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles.**
8. When Elizabeth assumes power, England and her closest advisers are split along religious lines. What does she do to bring team cohesion? What flaw exists in her plan to unify Catholics and Protestants? What does Elizabeth do to fix the flaw? What tools exist within the Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program to build and manage the team?
- **Elizabeth keeps a few previous advisers and adds her own to the group.**
  - **Elizabeth presents a very commanding speech regarding the need for unification. She makes light of her gender and states she cannot force them because she is a woman. They must vote their consciences.**
  - **The role of the Virgin Mary was diminished in the Church of England. Elizabeth fills in the void by assuming the role of Virgin Queen. She presents herself as virgin-like and vows marriage to England putting her subjects above her own desires.**

- **The Leadership Toolbox located on the Wildland Fire Leadership Web site lists many items to assist teamwork. Some include MCS' Crew Cohesion Assessment, leadership training scenarios and camps, STEX/TDGS, staff rides, etc.**
  - **This may be a good time to administer the Crew Cohesion Assessment.**
9. Abuse of power occurs with some leaders. What character(s) display the need for his/her own vanity and power above all else? Discuss examples of abuse of power you have witnessed in the wildland fire community? How did you handle the situation? Keep the discussion about actions and avoid names.
- **Answers may vary, but may include Norfolk's eye on the crown. He plots throughout the movie on ways of succeeding. He is encouraged by the Pope and others of power. Sir Walsingham says the following to Norfolk: "You were the most powerful man in England that could have been greater still. But you had not the courage to be loyal only the conviction of your own vanity."**
10. Elizabeth is known for being a communicator. How important is communication when leading people? How can the wildland fire leader improve communication? (Which Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles relate to communication?)
- **Answers will vary.**
  - **Communication is a key leadership action. Fourteen of the 33 Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles directly relate to communication.**
  - **Practice. Issue clear instructions. Use positive feedback to modify duties, tasks and assignments when appropriate. Clearly state expectations. Keep your subordinates informed. Provide accurate and timely briefings. Give the reason (intent) for assignments and tasks. Make yourself available to answer questions at appropriate times. Conduct frequent debriefings with the team to identify lessons learned. Provide early warning to subordinates of tasks they will be responsible for. Ask questions of peers and superiors. Actively listen to feedback from subordinates. Credit subordinates for good performance. Keep your superiors informed of your actions. Share the hazards and hardships with your subordinates.**

## Book/Film Discussion Topics

Have students read Alan Axelrod's **Elizabeth I CEO – Strategic Lessons from the Leader Who Built an Empire.**

- Lead a discussion comparing the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles with Axelrod's 136 strategic lessons.
- Lead a discussion comparing and contrasting the filmmaker's portrayal of Elizabeth I with Axelrod's representation.

- Discuss methods Elizabeth used to “survive” in a male-dominated society.
  - **“She used a combination of prudence, boldness, and genius”**
  - **Refer to the section titled *A Woman in a Man’s World*.**

# DUTY

**Be proficient in your job, both technically & as a leader.**

- Take charge when in charge.
- Adhere to professional standard operating procedures.
- Develop a plan to accomplish given objectives.

**Make sound & timely decisions.**

- Maintain situation awareness in order to anticipate needed actions.
- Develop contingencies & consider consequences.
- Improvise within the commander's intent to handle a rapidly changing environment.

**Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised, accomplished.**

- Issue clear instructions.
- Observe & assess actions in progress without micro-managing.
- Use positive feedback to modify duties, tasks & assignments when appropriate.

**Develop your subordinates for the future.**

- Clearly state expectations.
- Delegate tasks that you are not required to do personally.
- Consider individual skill levels & developmental needs when assigning tasks.

**Know your subordinates and look out for their well-being.**

- Put the safety of your subordinates above all other objectives.
- Take care of your subordinate's needs.
- Resolve conflicts between individuals on the team.

**Keep your subordinates informed.**

- Provide accurate & timely briefings.
- Give the reason (intent) for assignments & tasks.
- Make yourself available to answer questions at appropriate times.

**Build the team.**

- Conduct frequent debriefings with the team to identify lessons learned.
- Recognize accomplishments & reward them appropriately.
- Apply disciplinary measures equally.

**Employ your subordinates in accordance with their capabilities.**

- Observe human behavior as well as fire behavior.
- Provide early warning to subordinates of tasks they will be responsible for.
- Consider team experience, fatigue & physical limitations when accepting assignments.

**Know yourself and seek improvement.**

- Know the strengths/weaknesses in your character & skill level.
- Ask questions of peers & supervisors.
- Actively listen to feedback from subordinates.

**Seek responsibility and accept responsibility for your actions.**

- Accept full responsibility for & correct poor team performance.
- Credit subordinates for good performance.
- Keep your superiors informed of your actions.

**Set the example.**

- Share the hazards & hardships with your subordinates.
- Don't show discouragement when facing setbacks.
- Choose the difficult right over the easy wrong.

# RESPECT

# INTEGRITY

## Elizabeth

1. Document film clips illustrating/violating the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles.
2. Discuss leadership lessons learned from the film with group members or mentor.

## Duty

1. Be proficient in your job, both technically and as a leader.
2. Make sound and timely decisions.
3. Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised and accomplished.
4. Develop your subordinates for the future.

## Respect

1. Know your subordinates and look out for their well-being.
2. Keep your subordinates informed.
3. Build the team.
4. Employ your subordinates in accordance with their capabilities.

## Integrity

1. Know yourself and seek improvement.
2. Seek responsibility and accept responsibility for your actions.
3. Set the example.

## Elizabeth

### Guided Discussion

1. Elizabeth was well educated. How important is continual learning for successful leadership development?
2. Queen Mary ruled with a heavy, bloody hand whereas her half-sister Elizabeth ruled with compassion and conviction. Which leadership style worked best?
3. What made Elizabeth such a successful leader?
4. What seems to be Elizabeth's commander's intent when she assumes power?
5. How important are alliances as a leader? What advantages and disadvantages did you observe from alliances that were made or not entered into during this film? How did Mary and Elizabeth differ in their opinion of alliances with foreigners?
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