

**Developing the Leader Within You**  
**John Maxwell**  
**Summary by Mark R. Elliott\***

**INTRODUCTION**

The key to success in any endeavor is the ability to lead others successfully. Everything rises and falls on leadership. Most people have a desire to look for the exception instead of the desire to become exceptional. This is what I know: The effectiveness of your work will never rise above your ability to lead and influence others.

The president of Hyatt Hotels: “If there is anything I have learned in my 27 years in the service industry, it is this: 99 percent of all employees want to do a good job. How they perform is simply a reflection of the one for whom they work.”

Leonard Ravenhill in *The Last Days Newsletter* tells about a group of tourists who were visiting a picturesque village. As they walked by an old man sitting beside a fence, one tourist asked in a patronizing way, “Were any great men born in this village?” The old man replied, “Nope, only babies.”

There seems to be a great deal of confusion over the difference between “leadership” and “management.” John Gardner has pinpointed five characteristics that set “leader managers” apart from “run-of-the-mill managers.”

1. Leader managers are long-term thinkers who see beyond the day’s crisis and the quarterly report.
2. Leader managers’ interests in their companies do not stop with the units they head. They want to know how all of the company’s departments affect one another, and they are constantly reaching beyond their specific areas of influence.
3. Leader managers put heavy emphasis on vision, values, and motivation.
4. Leader managers have strong political skills to cope with conflicting requirements of multiple constituents.
5. Leader managers don’t accept the status quo.

Management is the process of assuring that the program and objectives of the organization are implemented. Leadership, on the other hand, has to do with casting vision and motivating people. You can lead your horse to water, but you can’t manage him to drink.

- ◆ Knowing how to do a job is the accomplishment of labor.
- ◆ Showing others is the accomplishment of a teacher.
- ◆ Making sure the work is done by others is the accomplishment of a manager.
- ◆ Inspiring others to do better work is the accomplishment of a leader.

**CHAPTER ONE—THE DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP: INFLUENCE**

Leadership is influence. That’s it. Nothing more; nothing less. My favorite leadership proverb is: He who thinketh he leadeth and hath no one following him is only taking a walk.

Once you define leadership as the ability to get followers, you work backward from that point of reference to figure out how to lead.

Those who possess the “status” of a leader often experience the frustration of few followers, and those who lack the proper titles may not see themselves as leaders and therefore don’t develop their leadership skills.

## INSIGHTS ABOUT INFLUENCE

- ◆ Everyone influences someone.

Sociologists tell us that even the most introverted individual will influence ten thousand other people during his or her lifetime! Each one of us is both influencing and being influenced by others.

- ◆ We never know who or how much we influence.

J. R. Miller said it well: “There have been meetings of only a moment which have left impressions for life, for eternity. No one can understand that mysterious thing we call influence. . . yet. . . everyone of us continually exerts influence, either to heal, to bless, to leave marks of beauty; or to wound, to hurt, to poison, to stain other lives.”

- ◆ The best investment in the future is a proper influence today.
- ◆ Influence is a skill that can be developed.

In Robert Dilenschneider’s book *Power and Influence*, he shares the idea of the “power triangle” to help leaders get ahead. He says, “The three components of this triangle are communication, recognition, and influence.

## THE LEVELS OF LEADERSHIP

- ◆ Level 1: Position/Rights—People follow because they have to. Your influence will not extend beyond the lines of your job description. The longer you stay here, the higher the turnover and the lower the morale.

People who stay at this level get into territorial rights, protocol, tradition, and organizational charts. Real leadership is being the person others will gladly and confidently follow. A real leader knows the difference between being the boss and being a leader, as illustrated by the following:

- The boss drives his workers; the leader coaches them.
- The boss depends upon authority; the leader on goodwill.
- The boss inspires fear; the leader inspires enthusiasm.
- The boss says “I”; the leader, “we.”
- The boss fixes the blame for the breakdown; the leader fixes the breakdown.
- The boss knows how it is done; the leader shows how.
- The boss says “go”; the leader says “let’s go!”

The story is told of a private in WWI who shouted on the battlefield, “Put out that match!” only to find to his chagrin that the offender was General “Black Jack” Pershing. When the private, who feared severe punishment, tried to stammer out his apology, General Pershing patted him on the back and said, “That’s all right, son. Just be glad I’m not a second lieutenant.”

- ◆ Level 2: Permission/Relationship— People follow because they want to. This level allows work to be fun. Caution: Staying too long on this level without rising will cause highly motivated people to become restless.

Leadership begins with the heart, not the head. It flourishes with a meaningful relationship, not more regulations.

The agenda is not the pecking order but people development. On this level, time, energy, and focus are placed on the individual's needs and desires.

Needless to say, you can love people without leading them, but you cannot lead people without loving them. *Caution!* Don't try to skip a level. The most often skipped level is 2, Permission. For example, a husband goes from level 1, Position, a wedding day title, to level 3, Production. He becomes a great provider for the family, but in the process he neglects the essential relationships that hold a family together. The family disintegrates and so does the husband's business. Relationships involve a process that provides the glue and much of the staying power for long-term, consistent production.

◆ Level 3: Production/Results—People follow because of what you have done for the organization. This is where success is sensed by most people. They like you and what you are doing. Problems are fixed with very little effort because of momentum.

On the “results” level, people come together to accomplish a purpose. They like to get together to get together, but they love to get together to accomplish something. In other words, they are results-oriented.

◆ Level 4: People Development/Reproduction—People follow because of what you have done for them. This is where long-range growth occurs. Your commitment to developing leaders will insure ongoing growth to the organization and to people. Do whatever you can to achieve and stay on this level.

The true leader can be recognized because somehow his people consistently demonstrate superior performances. A leader is great, not because of his or her power, but because of his or her ability to empower others. A worker's main responsibility is doing the work himself. A leader's main responsibility is developing others to do the work.

You win people's hearts by helping them grow personally.

You may not realize that many new people view you as a “position” leader because you have had no contact with them. The following suggestions will help you become a people developer:

1. Walk slowly through the crowd.—have some way of keeping in touch with everyone.
2. Develop key leaders

◆ Level 5: Personhood/Respect—People follow because of who you are and what you represent. This step is reserved for leaders who have spent years growing people and organizations. Few make it. Those who do are bigger than life.

#### CLIMBING THE STEPS OF LEADERSHIP

- ◆ The higher you go, the longer it takes.
- ◆ The higher you go, the higher the level of commitment.
- ◆ The higher you go, the easier it is to lead.

- ◆ The higher you go, the greater the growth.
- ◆ You never leave the base level.
- ◆ If you are leading a group of people, you will not be on the same level with everyone—not every person will respond the same way to your leadership.
- ◆ For you leadership to remain effective, it is essential that you take the other influencers within the group with you to the higher level.

## CONCLUSIONS ON INFLUENCE

In order to get to the top, you must do two things:

1. Know what level you are on at this moment.
2. Know and apply the qualities needed to be successful at each level. (see list for each level on pages 14-16)

## CHAPTER TWO—THE KEY TO LEADERSHIP: PRIORITIES

Thinking ahead and prioritizing responsibilities mars the major differences between a leader and a follower, because:

- ◆ Practical people know how to get what they want.
- ◆ Philosophers know what they ought to want.
- ◆ Leaders know how to get what they ought to want.

Success can be defined as *the progressive realization of a predetermined goal*.

**THE PARETO PRINCIPLE**—20 percent of your priorities will give you 80 percent of your production, IF you spend your time, energy, money, and personnel on the top 20 percent of your priorities.

1. Determine which people are the top 20 percent producers.
2. Spend 80 percent of our “people time” with the top 20 percent.
3. Spend 80 percent of your personal developmental dollars on the top 20 percent.
4. Determine what 20 percent of the work gives 80 percent of the return and train an assistant to do the 80 percent less effective work. This frees up the producer to do what he/she does best.
5. Ask the top 20 percent to do on-the-job training for the next 20 percent.

Remember we teach what we know; we reproduce what we are. Like begets like.

Efficiency is the foundation for survival. Effectiveness is the foundation for success.

You cannot overestimate the unimportance of practically everything.

## ITS NOT HOW HARD YOU WORK; IT'S HOW SMART YOU WORK

◆ **Organize or Agonize**—A life in which anything goes will ultimately be a life in which nothing goes.

High Importance/High Urgency: Tackle these projects first.

High Importance/Low Urgency: Set deadlines for completion and get these projects worked into your daily routine.

Low Importance/High Urgency: find quick, efficient ways to get this work done without much personal involvement. If possible, delegate it to a “can do” assistant.

Low Importance/Low Urgency: This is busy or repetitious work such as filing. Stack it up and do it in one-half hour segments every week; get somebody else to do it; or don't do it at all. Before putting off until tomorrow something you can do today, study it clearly. Maybe you can postpone it indefinitely.

◆ Choose or Lose—The question is not, “Will my calendar be full?” but “Who will fill my calendar?” If we are leaders of others, the question is not “Will I see people? But “Who will I see?”

◆ Evaluate or Stalemate—Decide what to do and do it; decide what not to do and don't do it. Evaluation of priorities, however, is not quite that simple. The following questions will assist your priority process:

1. What is required of me? What do I have to do that no one but me can do?
2. What give me the greatest return? Three common problems in many organizations are:
  - ◆ Abuse: Too few employees are doing too much.
  - ◆ Disuse: Too many employees are doing too little.
  - ◆ Misuse: Too many employees are doing the wrong things.
3. What is most rewarding—Take this job and love it.

### PRIORITY PRINCIPLES

◆ Priorities never “stay put.” To keep priorities in place:

1. Evaluate: every month review the 3R's Requirements/Return/Reward
2. Eliminate: Ask yourself, “What am I doing that can be done by someone else?”
3. Estimate: What are the top projects you are doing this month and how long will they take?

◆ Principle: You cannot overestimate the unimportance of practically everything.

William James said that the art of being wise is “the art of knowing what to overlook.”

Dr. Anthony Campolo tells about a sociological study in which fifty people over the age of ninety-five were asked one question: “If you could live your life over again what would you do differently?”

1. I would reflect more.
2. I would risk more.
3. I would do more things that would live on after I am dead.

A young concert violinist was asked the secret of her success. She replied, “Planned neglect.” Until my practice period was completed, I deliberately neglected everything else.

◆ The good is the enemy of the best.

How to break the tie between two good options:

1. Ask your overseer or coworkers their preference.
2. Can one of the options be handled by someone else?
3. Make your decision based on the purpose of the organization—excellent ILLUS about lighthouse keeper and oil for his light.

◆ You can't have it all.

He who seeks one thing, and but one,  
May hope to achieve it before life is done.

But he who seeks all things wherever he goes  
Must reap around him in whatever he sows  
A harvest of barren regret.

◆ Too many priorities paralyze us.

William H Hinson tells us why animal trainers carry a stool when they go into a cage of lions. The animal tries to focus on all four legs at once. In the attempt to focus on all four, a kind of paralysis overwhelms the animal, and it becomes tame, weak, and disabled because its attention is fragmented.

If you are overloaded with work, list the priorities on a separate sheet of paper *before* you take it to your boss and see what he will choose as the priorities. All true leaders have learned to say No to the good in order to say Yes to the best.

◆ When little priorities demand too much of us, big problems arise.

Robert J. McKain said, “The reason most major goals are not achieved is that we spend our time doing second things first.”

Of the little things in life trip us up. A tragic example is an Eastern Airlines jumbo jet that crashed in the Everglades. The light that indicates proper deployment of the landing gear failed to light. While an experienced crew of highly trained pilots fiddled with a seventy-five cent light bulb, the plane flew right into the ground.

◆ Time deadlines and emergencies force us to prioritize.

We find this in Parkinson’s Law: If you have only one letter to write, it will take all day to do it. If you have twenty letters to write, you’ll get them done in one day.

Under normal conditions, we are efficient (doing things right). When time pressure mounts or emergencies arise, we become effective (doing the right things). Efficiency is the foundation for survival. Effectiveness is the foundation of success.

◆ Too often we learn too late what is really important.

An infant is born with a clenched fist; a man dies with an open hand. Life has a way of prying free the things we think are so important.

\*Mark R. Elliott served as a Director of Missions (Associational Mission Strategist) in western Iowa and eastern Nebraska for almost three decades. He is a strong advocate for obedience and Biblically based disciple making. As such, he knows that making healthy disciples requires Christian leaders to be constantly pursuing spiritual maturity—be lifelong learners. Because of the time constraints of ministry, most pastors focus their reading list on resources that assist them in teaching and preaching the Word of God. As such, books focusing on church health, leadership development, and church growth tend to find their way to the bottom of the stack. With that reality in mind, Mark has written discussion summaries on several books that have helped him to personally grow in Christ and that tend to find themselves on the bottom of most pastor’s stack. Many pastors have found them helpful as they are able to more quickly process great insights from other pastors and authors.