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# 101 Life Changing Thoughts on Leadership

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**101**

LIFE CHANGING

Thoughts  
On Leadership

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**101**

LIFE CHANGING

Thoughts  
On Leadership

And whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

*Matt 20:27, 28*

But not so with you; rather let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leaders as one who serves.

*Luke 22:26*

Think as Christ Jesus thought. Jesus has always been as God is. But He did not hold to His rights as God. He put aside everything that belonged to Him and made Himself the same as a servant who is owned by someone. He became human by being born as a man. After He became a man, He gave up His important place and obeyed by dying on a cross. Because of this, God lifted Jesus high above everything else. He gave Him a name that is greater than any other name. So when the name of Jesus is spoken, everyone in heaven and on earth and under the earth will bow down before Him. And every tongue will say Jesus Christ is Lord. Everyone will give honor to God the Father.

*Phil 2:5-11*

## THOUGHT 1

Let everyday be a day of humility; condescend to all the weaknesses and infirmities of your fellow creatures, cover their frailties, love their excellence, encourage their virtues, relieve their wants, rejoice in their prosperities, compassionate their distress, receive their friendship, overlook their unkindness, forgive their malice, be a servant of servants, and condescend to do the lowliest offices of the lowest of mankind.

*William Law, Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life, 1967.*

Leadership is the art of influencing, motivating and inspiring people to do something or be something that under ordinary circumstances they would never do or be. Leadership transforms ordinary people into ardent followers whose energies are channeled towards the fulfillment of a goal and a mission. Leadership calls one to something greater and larger than one's own personal agenda.

*Trevor O'Reggio*

### THOUGHT 3

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“Some believe there is nothing one man or one woman can do against the enormous array of the world’s ills -- against misery, against ignorance, or injustice and violence. Yet many of the world’s great movements, of thought and action, have flowed from the work of a single man. A young monk began the Protestant reformation, a young general extended an empire from Macedonia to the borders of the earth, and a young woman reclaimed the territory of France. It was a young Italian explorer who discovered the New World, and 32 year old Thomas Jefferson who proclaimed that all men are created equal. ‘Give me a place to stand,’ said Archimedes, ‘and I will move the world.’ These men moved the world, and so can we all.”

*John F. Kennedy*

A true and safe leader is likely to be one who has no desire to lead, but is forced into a position of leadership by the inward pressure of the Holy Spirit and the press of the external situation. Such were Moses and David and the Old Testament prophets. I think there was hardly a great leader from Paul to the present day but that was drafted by the Holy Spirit for the task and commissioned by the Lord of the church to fill a position he had little heart for. I believe it might be accepted as a fairly reliable rule of thumb that a man who is ambitious to lead is disqualified as a leader. The true leader will have no desire to lord it over God's heritage, but will be humble, gentle, self-sacrificing and altogether as ready to follow as to lead, when the Spirit makes it clear that a wiser and more gifted man than himself has appeared.

*A. W. Tozer*

## THOUGHT 5

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The greatest want of the world is the want of leaders who are not susceptible to bribery and corruption, leaders who are transparent and are authentic people of integrity, leaders who are not afraid to identify and name evil for what it is; leaders who will carry out their duty with conscientiousness and a solemn sense of responsibility, leaders who are governed by conviction and principle than by public opinion and political expediency.

*Trevor O'Reggio*

The leaders who most work effectively, it seems to me never say “I.” They think “we.” They think “team.” They understand their job is to make the team function. They accept the responsibility and don’t sidestep, but “we” get the credit. There is an identification (very often, quite unconscious) with the task and with the group. This is what creates trust, what enables you to get the task done.

*Peter F. Drucker,*

*Managing the Non-Profit Organization: Principles and Practice, 1990.*

## THOUGHT 7

All men dream but not equally. Those who dream by night in the rusty recesses of their mind awake to find it was vanity. But the dreamers of day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes to make it possible.

*T. E. Lawrence*

I am a dreamer and some men see things as they are and ask why; I dream of things that never were and ask why not?

*George Bernard Shaw*

## THOUGHT 9

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**H**uman progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering and struggle; the tireless concern of dedicated individuals. Without persistent effort, time itself becomes an ally of the insurgent and primitive forces of irrational emotionalism and social destruction. This no time for apathy and complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action.

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Christian leadership is called ministry precisely to express that in the service of others new life can be brought about. It is this service which gives eyes to see the flower breaking through the cracks in the street, ears to hear a word of forgiveness, muted by hatred and hostility and hands to feel new life under the cover of death and destruction.

*Henri Nouwen*

## THOUGHT 11

Success without a successor is failure. One of the most critical functions of an effective leader is the mentoring, grooming and training of a successor, who will carry on when its time for him to step aside. Many so-called leaders boast of their indispensability to their organization which is most evident in their absence nothing seems to work as well. This situation however reflects not success but failure for it reveals the leaders lack of vision in preparing for the organization.

*Maverick*

Strangely, the expounders of many of the great new ideas of history were frequently considered on the lunatic fringe for some or all of their lives. If one stands up and is counted, from time to time one may get knocked down. But remember this: a man flattened by an opponent can get up again. A man flattened by conformity stays down for good.

*Thomas Watson Jr.*

## THOUGHT 13

### **The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make** *Thoughts 13-22*

#### **The top-down Attitude**

- The top-down attitude comes all too naturally to many people
- Servant leadership is much more rare.
- Effective leaders see themselves at the bottom of an inverted pyramid.

### **Putting Paperwork before Peoplework**

- The greater the leadership role, the less time there seems to be for people.
- The greater the leadership role, the more important people work is.
- People are opportunities, not interruptions.
- Only through association is there transformation.

## THOUGHT 15

### **The Absence of Affirmation**

- Everyone thrives on affirmation and praise.
- Leadership has as much to do with the “soft sciences” as with getting things done.
- We wildly underestimate the power of the tiniest personal touch of kindness.
- Learn to read the varying levels of affirmation your people need.

### **No Room for Mavericks?**

- Mavericks can save us from the slide toward bureaucracy.
- Large organizations usually kill off mavericks before they can take root.
- Mavericks make messes by their very nature - the good messes institutions need.
- Learn to recognize truly useful mavericks.

## THOUGHT 17

### **Dictatorship in Decision-making**

- Dictators deny the value of individuals.
- The major players in an organization are like its stockholders. They should have a say in its direction.
- The one who does the job should decide how it is done.
- Flat organizations are the model of the future. Less hierarchy, more trust & empowerment.

### **Dirty Delegation**

- Over-managing is one of the great cardinal sins of poor leadership.
- Nothing frustrates those who work for you more than sloppy delegation with too many strings attached.
- Delegation should match each worker's follow-through ability.

## THOUGHT 19

### **Communication Chaos**

- Never assume that anyone knows anything.
- The bigger the group, the more attention must be given to communication.
- When left in the dark, people tend to dream up wild rumors.
- Communication must be the passionate obsession of effective leadership.

### Missing the Clues of Corporate Culture

- Corporate culture is “the way we do things around here.”
- Never underestimate the mighty power of your organization’s culture.
- Cultivating and changing the culture should be one of the leadership’s top priorities.
- Learn to respect values different from your own.

## THOUGHT 21

### **Success without Successors**

- Pride tightens the grip on leadership; humility relaxes and lets go.
- Finishing well is an important measure of success in leadership.
- Letting go of leadership is like sending your children away to college; It hurts, but has to be done.
- Mentoring is a nonnegotiable function of successful leadership.

### **Failure to Focus on the Future**

- The future is rushing at us at breakneck speed.
- A leader's concentration must not be on the past nor on the present.
- Vision is an effective leader's chief preoccupation.
- Organizations are reinvented with new generations of dreamers.

## THOUGHT 23

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*The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make* by Hans Finzel  
*Thoughts 23-27*  
Attributes of an Inspirational Leader.

### Attitude of Service

To be an inspirational leader, you must adopt an attitude of service towards those you lead. This requires laying aside selfish interests to add value to another person. In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., “An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.” When you serve, you awaken something magnetic inside of you. People are drawn to follow you because they know you’ll find ways to make them better.

### Affirmation

To inspire means to have a positive view of others. If we're not careful, we become fault-finders, magnifying the flaws in everyone around us. Instead, leaders should emulate gold prospectors - always on the lookout for potential gold mines. When they find traces of ore, prospectors assume there's a rich vein to unearth, and they start digging. In the same fashion, leaders ought to search for the best traits within a person and commit to uncovering them.

One of the best applications of this idea is expressed in what I call the 101 percent principle: Find the one thing that you believe is a person's greatest asset, and then give 100 percent encouragement in that area. Focusing on a person's strengths inspires them by promoting confidence, growth, and success.

## THOUGHT 25

### **Attentiveness**

**G**reat inspirers know the desires of those they lead. As much as people respect the knowledge and ability of their leaders, these are secondary concerns for them. They don't care how much their leaders know until they know how much their leaders care. When leaders attend to the deeply felt needs of their team, the determination and commitment of each team member skyrockets.

## Availability

Leaders inspire by intentionally investing time in the people they lead. They make themselves available. People cannot be nurtured from a distance or by infrequent spurts of attention. They need a leader to spend time with them - planned time, not just a conversation in passing.

In our fast-paced and demanding world, time is a leader's most precious commodity. While it feels costly to give up, nothing communicates that you value a person more than the gift of your time. In addition, investing time to develop others has a way of reaping dividends. As Ralph Waldo Emerson remarked, "It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."

## THOUGHT 27

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### Authenticity

To inspire, leaders have to be genuine. More than anything else, followers want to believe in and trust their leaders. However, when leaders break promises or fail to honor commitments, they reveal themselves as being inauthentic, and they lose credibility. Trust rests upon a foundation of authenticity. To gain trust, a leader must consistently align words and deeds, while showing a degree of transparency.

*John Maxwell*

The hardest leadership task is holding people accountable - insisting that they take responsibility to make decisions and become leaders themselves.

*O'Toole, 13*

## THOUGHT 29

Leaders bring out the best in their followers. First leaders inspire followers by showing them how good they are capable of becoming and then they help followers realize their elevated aspirations.

*O'Toole, 23*

The greatest want of the world is the want of men - men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle is to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.

*E. G. White, Education, 57.*

## THOUGHT 31

One of the myths of leadership is that leaders stand at the pinnacle of authority and thus are accountable to no one. In truth with the exception of dictators (who, by definition aren't leaders) everybody is ultimately responsible to somebody. We all have a boss (in the case of the U.S. president that particular boss is the people) or someone or some body of people to whom we must report.

*O'Toole, Leadership, 298.*

If you can do something best by doing it yourself - sell a product, create a computer program, solve an equation, write a book - by definition that activity does not require leadership. The number one fact of organizational life is that leadership is never a solo act. Leadership is always a social, or group activity that involves getting other people to do the right things.

*O'Toole, 8.*

## THOUGHT 33

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Leadership is different from relationship in that leaders generate hope and conviction in their followers. They are people whom others perceive as being able to make things better. They generate:

- confidence in people who are frightened
- certainty in people who are vacillating
- action where there is hesitation
- strength where there is weakness
- expertise where there was floundering
- courage where there is cowardice
- optimism where there is cynicism
- conviction that the future will be better

*Editors Frances Hesselbein, Marshall Goldsmith, Richard Becklord,  
Leadership of the Future, 139*

## **Six Critical Tasks of a Leader in the Midst of Turbulent Transitions**

1. Define the business of the business
2. create a winning strategy
3. communicate persuasively
4. behave with integrity
5. respect others
6. act

## THOUGHT 35

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**T**he Law of Influence: The true measure of leadership is influence—  
Nothing more, nothing less.

True leadership cannot be awarded, appointed or assigned, it must be earned. Leadership is about influencing people to follow. It is not the position that makes the leader; it is the leader that makes the position. The essence of all power is to get people to participate.

*John Maxwell*

**T**he Law of Process: Leadership develops daily, not in a day.

Becoming a leader is a lot like investing successfully in the stock market. What matters most is what you do day by day over the long haul. The secret of our success is found in our daily agenda. Successful leaders are learners as a result of self-discipline and perseverance. The goal each day is to get better and to build on yesterday's progress. Phases of leadership growth:

1. As long as a person doesn't know what he doesn't know, he doesn't grow.
2. I know what I don't know; to be conscious that you are ignorant is a great step to knowledge.

## THOUGHT 36

3. I grow and know and it starts to show. When you recognize your lack of skill and begin the daily disciple of personal growth in leadership, exciting things start to happen.
4. I simply go because of what I know. The secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his time when it comes.

*John Maxwell*

**T**he Law of Navigation: Anyone can steer the ship but it takes a leader to steer the course.

A good leader remains focused . . . controlling your direction is better than being controlled by it. Navigators see the whole trip in their minds before they leave the dock. They have a vision for their destination, they understand what it will take to get there, they know who they will need on the team to be successful, and they recognize the obstacles long before they appear on the horizon. A leader is one who sees more than others see who sees farther than others see, and who sees before others see. They listen to what others have to say, learn from past experience, they count the cost before making commitments.

## THOUGHT 37

- predetermine a course of action
- lay out your goals
- adjust your priorities
- notify key personnel
- allow time for acceptance
- head into action
- expect problems
- always point to the success
- daily review your plan

*John Maxwell*

### **The Law of E. F. Hutton**

When leaders speak people listen.

- the real leader holds the power not just the position
- being in power is like being a lady. If you have to tell people you are, you aren't
- the real test of leadership isn't where you start out. It's where you end up

### **How do people become leaders?**

- character—who we are. True leadership begins with the inner person
- relationship—build the right relationship with the right people
- knowledge—what they know. Know and understand the facts

## THOUGHT 36

- intuition—what they feel, ability to deal with intangibles
- experience—where they have been
- past success—what they have done. Extend yourself, take risk and succeed, develop a track record

People listen not necessarily because of the truth being communicated in the message but because of the respect for the speaker.

*John Maxwell*

## The Law of Solid Ground

**T**rust is the foundation of leadership. It must be earned. You must exemplify it by character, competence and connection.

People will forgive honest mistakes, but if you violate their trust you will find it difficult to regain their confidence.

Don't take shortcuts no matter how long you have been leading people.

Character is the key, it makes trust possible.

Character communicates consistency—you can't get much done in life if you only work on the days you feel great.

Character communicates potential—have real regard for the people with whom you work.

## THOUGHT 39

Character communicate respect and makes sound decisions, admit mistakes and put what' s best for your followers and the organization ahead of you.

The only thing that walks back from the tomb with the mourners and refuses to be buried is the character of a person. What a person is survives him. It can never be buried.

*John Maxwell*

Sadly, most men who covet power are unworthy of it. There is one hurdle the human race has rarely been able to overcome: Most men who covet political power are unworthy to exercise it, while those we could trust are not attracted to the exercise of power.

In almost every known human society, the men who rise to power—with few exceptions—display the same tendencies, no matter which party or philosophy they adhere to.

The most aggressive and competitive personalities come to control the political machinery; and those who are least competitive or greedy for power do not determine that society's conduct, especially in the employment of military might.

Leadership of this sort lies in the genes as much as in the structures of the

## THOUGHT 40

social and economic order. Thus, those who seek power tend to gain it, and those who do not, do not. And the former most generally do so for the sake of self-aggrandizement, or glory, or fame—which, historically, means attacking, invading and subjugating others.

In this way, the more pacific and cooperative traits of our species—such as friendliness, goodwill and sympathy—do not have a chance to flourish in this heady atmosphere of conquest and expansion at the expense not only of their weaker neighbors but of their own populations as well.

Much, if not most, of what we commonly call “patriotism” has little to do with the legitimate needs and aspirations of a people; the same American revolutionists who demanded “freedom” for themselves had few scruples about dispossessing the Indians and enslaving the blacks.

When a nation goes to war for “the Fatherland” or “Mother Russia” or “John Bull” or “Uncle Sam,” they often do not know (or care) for what end or purpose they are fighting, inflamed as they are by slogans their chieftains have cunningly contrived for them to march under.

Whichever regime happens to be in power at the time, be it Czarist or Marxist, identifies its own narrow interest with the interest of “the nation”—and men willingly die for a Napoleon, a Hitler or a Stalin in the deluded belief that they are defending their independence.

The crux of the human condition seems to be that the wrong types of men are almost always in charge, because they are take-charge types; while the gentle, the fraternal, the living-and-let-livers become their subjects and their tools almost by default.

## THOUGHT 40

Every group tends to let power pass to a “strong” man, but the strong men in history have more often led us to destruction than to reconciliation—until now we face destruction on a global scale, and the dream of fellowship seems further away than ever.

*Sidney Harris*

## Seven Lessons from Leaders who Lead into the Future

### *Thoughts # 41 - 47*

#### **#41 Leaders don't wait**

- act with urgency - waiting for permission to begin is not characteristic of leaders. If you are going to lead now or in the future, the first thing you've got to do is launch a voyage of discovery.

#### **#42 Character counts**

- leaders must be available, trustworthy because people must believe in them and trust them

## THOUGHT 41-47

### **#43 Leaders have their head in the clouds and their feet on the ground**

- leaders must be forward looking having a sense of direction and vision for the future that is uplifting and enabling

### **#44 Shared values makes a difference**

- leaders must build a community of shared values which promotes high levels of loyalty to the organization, facilitate consensus, encourages ethical behavior, foster pride an organization and foster team work and expert cooperation

**#45 You can't do it alone**

- leadership is not a solo act but an example of shared involvement and support of many people in which a spirit of collaboration is fostered to achieve a desired end

**#46 The legacy you leave is the life you lead**

- It is not enough for leaders to deliver speeches. Their compelling words must be equally matched with exemplary conduct

**#47 Leadership is everybody's business**

- Leadership is not a place but a process where everyone can participate. Everyone can lead for leadership is a learnable skill.

*Editors : Francis Hesselbein, Richard Beckherd and Marshall Goldsmith.*

## THOUGHT 48

**T**o treat a man as he appears to be and you make him worse. But if you treat him as if he already were what he potentially could be, and you make him what he should be.

*Goethe*

Leadership is leaders acting – as well as caring, inspiring and persuading others to act – for certain shared goals that represent that values – the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations – of themselves and the people they represent. And the genius of leadership lies in the manner in which leaders can abort, visualize, and act on their own and followers’ values and motivations.

*James MacGregor Burns*

## THOUGHT 50

The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind in other men the conviction and the will to carry on. The genius of a good leader is to leave behind him a situation which common sense without grace of genius can deal with successfully.

*Walter Lippman*

To lead people, walk beside them. As for the best leaders, the people do not notice their existence. The next best, the people honor and praise. The next, the people hate . . . when the best leader's work is done the people say "we did it ourselves!"

*Lao-tsu*

## THOUGHT 52

**L**ead and inspire. People don't try to manage and manipulate people.  
Inventories can be managed but people must be led.

*Ross Perot*

Leaders can be tempted to surround themselves with “yes” men and women who display a deep personal loyalty. By stacking their inner circle with comrades, leaders shield themselves from checks and balances on their power. Once a leader’s power is free from scrutiny, abuses are soon to follow.

*John Baldoni*

## THOUGHT 54

**T**he more one learns the more he understands his ignorance. I am simply an ignorant man, trying to lessen ignorance.

*Lewis L'Amour*

**H**old yourself responsible for a higher standard than anybody else expects of you. Never excuse yourself. Never pity yourself. Be a hard master to yourself and be lenient to every body else.

*Henry Ward Beecher*

## THOUGHT 56

Control is not leadership, management is not leadership; leadership is leadership. If you seek to lead, invest at least 50% of your time leading yourself—your own purpose, ethics, principles, motivation, conduct. Invest at least 20% with those who have authority over you and 15% leading your peers. If you don't understand that you work for your mislabeled 'subordinates,' then you know nothing of leadership. You know only tyranny.

*Del Hock*

**Choices – Thinking clearly and making wise decisions.**

Careful decision-making requires a sense of right and wrong rooted in character. To make the right decisions consistently we can't let external influence or peer pressure cause us to do something wrong when our internal conscience is telling us to do what is right. To violate conscience undermines our self-respect and shatters not only our moral authority, but our confidence as leaders.

We must also understand how pleasure and pain impact your choices. In short, if we enjoy temporary pleasure with a disregard for its harmful effects on us and other people, we're going to suffer long-term pain. Leadership demands sacrifices for the near-term to receive lasting benefits.

## THOUGHT 57

The longer we wait to make sacrifices, the harder they become. Successful people make important decisions early in their life, then manage those decisions the rest of their lives.

*John C. Maxwell*

**Conduct – Doing the right things consistently well.**

**C**onduct is defined as “a mode of personal behavior.” Only individuals can behave. The conduct of a company, government agency, sports team, or church is a reflection of the conduct of the individuals making up the organization.

To shape the conduct of the individuals who follow us, we must be able to hold them accountable for their behavior. But first, we must be held accountable ourselves. Author Church Swindoll says accountability is “a willingness to explain your actions.” if our actions are indefensible, we’ll be stripped of the real authority to exercise moral leadership. We must submit our behavior to the scrutiny of trusted advisors before dictating the conduct of those we lead.

## THOUGHT 58

As leaders, we set the tone for the conduct of the individuals in our organization. People do what people see. Conduct is learned through observation. As Dr. Michael Guido says, “The world pays more attention to your conduct than it does to your creed.” As leaders, we teach what we know, but we reproduce who we are.

*John C. Maxwell*

**Consequences – Receiving the results of seeds that we sow.**

**T**he success of my day is based on the seeds that I sow, not the harvest I reap. Too often, leaders bypass the process of sowing seeds in favor of shortcuts for results. Sadly, the end begins to justify the means, and principles are tossed out for more expedient behavior. I've found submitting to the process of sowing the right seeds will meet with tremendous rewards—whether I see the fruits firsthand or not. Here are five reasons I believe in keeping my attention on sowing well rather than seeing instant results:

- (1) The seeds I sow will determine the harvest I reap.
- (2) There is no reaping unless I have been sowing.
- (3) Sowers are committed to giving before receiving.

## THOUGHT 59

(4) Sowers enjoy giving more than receiving.

(5) Sowing daily into the lives of others will compound over time.

We spend our day either preparing or repairing. Preparing allows us to focus on today, while repairing forces us to clean up yesterday. Preparing invests for the future, repairing pays down past debts. Preparing increases efficiency, but repairing consumes precious time. Preparing increases confidence, while repairing breeds discouragement. Cherish each day to grow and develop, and avoid making mistakes which will return to haunt you. Remember: the secret of your success is determined by your daily agenda.

*John C. Maxwell*

**Authenticity—Be true to yourself.**

Leadership won't work when it's artificial, contrived, or insincere. Today's followers are hypersensitive to inauthentic leadership, and modern consumers have little tolerance for products peddled by passionless organizations. Successful leadership stems from the heart of the leader.

“You have to understand who you are and figure out a way to communicate it. It might be in a different industry, but it's about what pumps the blood through your veins, what makes you excited, what pushes your buttons. And then discovering the best way to communicate that, no matter how big or small; it's what you stand for, what you believe in, and what reflects who you are.”

*Andre Agassi, Cofounder, Agassi Graf Development*

## THOUGHT 61

**Trust—If you build it, they will come.**

**A**s a consumer, it's maddening to find an amazing "sale," which turns out to be of little to no value due to stipulations in the fine print. It's frustrating to buy a software package and later learn it's not able to deliver the features promised by the salesperson. It's infuriating to purchase a used vehicle in "great condition" only to discover major mechanical problems that were glossed over by the previous owner.

When transacting business, we, as consumers, bring expectations to the table. We want high-quality products that deliver as advertised. We anticipate customer service that treats us as dignified human beings rather

than distractions. We're drawn to brands which consistently earn our trust by meeting our expectations, and we reward these brands with our business.

*Howard Schultz, Chairman, Starbucks*

## THOUGHT 62

**A**uthenticity. If you're not fighting to stay true to who you are, life will pigeonhole you in a confining role. It's up to you to consistently position yourself to the areas of your greatest strength and passion.

*John C. Maxwell*

## The Seven Demands of Leadership

### *Thought #63 - 69*

**V**isioning. “Successful leaders are able to look out, across, and beyond the organization. They have a talent for seeing and creating the future. They use highly visual language that paints pictures of the future for those they lead. As a result, they seem to attain bigger goals because they create a collective mindset that propels people to help them make their vision a reality.”

## THOUGHT 64

**M**aximizing Values. “By highlighting what is important about work, great leaders make clear what is important to them in life. They clarify what are their own values—particularly a concern for people—relate to their work. They also communicate a sense of personal integrity and a commitment to act based on their values.”

**C**hallenging Experiences. “By galvanizing people with a clear vision and strong values, the leaders we studied were able to challenge their teams to achieve significant work goals. In fact, those leaders themselves had been assigned significant challenging experiences at key points in their careers while being given the freedom to determine how they would achieve outcomes.”

When others run from the challenge before them, leaders rise to the challenge before them. English historian Arnold Toynbee has said, “Appropriate response to challenge is the basis for the rise of any society or organization.” A leader’s value to others is to lead them through difficult challenges by providing hope and bestowing courage.

## THOUGHT 66

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“**T**he leaders we studied had a close relationship either with their manager or someone in the best position to advise them. This is often someone from outside their organization who serves as their mentor.”

Relationships define who we are and what we become. Stick to the confines of self and you'll remain immature and small. Have the humility to learn from those around you. Identify people's strengths and uniqueness and inquire about them. When learning is your passion and you value people, teachers will crop up all around you.

**B**uilding a Constituency. “Beyond close one-to-one relationships, leaders also create rapport at many levels across their organization and beyond. They know the benefits of building a wide consistency . . . These leaders understand networks and the importance of networking.” Relationships are precious resources, and leaders accumulate social capital. As it is said, “Your network determines your net worth.” Networkers share experiences, opportunities, and advice, and they connect relationships. By investing in the well-being of others, networkers naturally earn a return as they benefit from reciprocated generosity of those they have helped.

## THOUGHT 68

**M**aking Sense of Experience. “In all their relationships, effective leaders enlighten others because they can make sense of experience.”

Experience is to be cherished and absorbed. It comes at a price and once bought, experience should be explored until all its treasures is uncovered. Experience is not the best teacher—evaluated experience is. Reflection turns experience into insight.

**K**nowing self. “Effective leaders have an acute sense of their own strengths and weakness. They know who they are—and who they are not. They don’t try to be all things to all people. Their personalities and behaviors are indistinguishable between work and home. They are genuine. It is this absence of pretense that helps them connect to others so well.

Productive leaders have matured to the point of honest self-awareness. They couple knowledge with understanding. They have resources and means, but their grasp of meaning separates them from the pack. They have know-how, but more importantly they know why. Their sight generates insight.

## THOUGHT 70

**H**e that thinketh he leadeth . . . and hath no one following him . . .  
only taketh a walk.

*Dr. John Maxwell*

**General Colin Powell's Rules:**

1. It ain't as bad as you think. It will look better in the morning.
2. Get mad, then get over it.
3. Avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls, your ego goes with it.
4. It can be done!
5. Be careful what you choose. You may get it.
6. Don't let adverse facts stand in the way of a good decision.
7. You can't make someone else's choices. You shouldn't let someone else make yours.
8. Check small things.
9. Share credit.

## THOUGHT 71

10. Remain calm. Be kind.
11. Have a vision. Be demanding.
12. Don't take counsel of your fears or naysayers.
13. Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.

## Characteristics of Authentic Leadership:

### *Thought #72 - 76*

72

**A**uthentic leaders make judgments based upon consistent values. Their moral compass reliably informs their decisions. Followers know what to expect from a leader who holds to non-negotiable standards.

73

**A**uthentic leaders place purpose before self-expression. They don't covet the limelight as much as they crave the fulfillment of a dream. Rather than whimsically pursuing shifting desires, authentic leaders align their actions around a clear purpose. This vision-centeredness allows followers to have insight into the direction the leader is headed.

## THOUGHT 72-76

74

**A**uthentic leaders exercise discretion when unveiling their emotions and opinions. They recognize that the intricacies of organizational management may prevent them from a full revelation of their knowledge and inner feelings. In the words of Ron Heifetz, co-founder of Harvard's Center for Public Leadership, "Authentic leadership-which includes judgment about pace, framing and what and how to disclose information-is a commitment to serve the growth and adaptability of those you lead."

75

**A**uthentic leaders seek dissonant views and unvarnished truth. They are not content to guide the organization without critically evaluating their ideas and assumptions. They thrive on the interplay of ideas and are humble enough to confront reality.

76

Authentic leaders engineer healthy cultures, phonies build cults around personal charisma. Authentic leaders create flexible organizations in the hopes of sustaining success over time. Inauthentic leaders wield control and construct organizations dependant upon their personal appeal.

*Dr. Saj-nicole Joni*

## THOUGHT 77

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“**T**here are many reasons managers fail. For some, the organization outgrows them. Others don’t change with the times. Some spread themselves to think and work long and hard but not smart. Many abandon the priorities and disciplines that once made them great and never get back to them. A few make poor character choices . . . But all these causes for management failure have their root in one common cause: pride. In the simplest terms, pride is devastating. I’m not talking about the pride one has in their work or their accomplishments. I’m indicting the pride that inflates your sense of self-worth and distorts your perspective of reality.”

*Dave Anderson*

## The Problems of Pride

### *Thought #78 - 86*

Pride Stops Us from Building a Team. Prideful leaders readily contract “Superman Syndrome: and devalue the benefits of teamwork. They rely on their own prowess to solve problems and advance the organization. Blinded by their self-centeredness, arrogant leaders are unable to appreciate the strengths in others.”

## THOUGHT 79

### **Pride Renders Us Unteachable.**

**L**eaders who are assured they know everything don't bother about personal growth. Their ego convinces them that they have arrived, and they quit searching for life's lessons in the people and circumstances around them.

**Pride Closes Our Mind to Feedback.**

Pride deafens us to the advice or warnings of those around us. As Stephen Covey has said, “It takes humility to seek feedback. It takes wisdom to understand it, analyze it, and appropriately act on it.” Without humility, we care about only one opinion—our own.

## THOUGHT 81

### **Pride Prevents Us from Admitting Mistakes.**

**T**he Duke of Wellington once haughtily drew himself up to his full height and thundered to one of his staff officers, “God knows I have many faults, but being wrong is not one of them!” Pride won’t allow for failure. The egotistical leader blames mistakes on others, justifies them as inevitable, or refuses to acknowledge them.

**Pride Keeps Us from Making Changes.**

**P**ride will cause leaders to pledge allegiance to the status quo rather than opening themselves to change; especially if the change alters a system they built. Since leaders have emotional equity in their own work, they will justify living with broken systems rather than changing them.

## THOUGHT 83

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### **Pride Encourages Poor Character Choices**

**B**ecause of arrogance, ignorance, or a little of both, leaders start taking shortcuts that compromise their values. In their conceit, they think they're above the rules or are too smart to get caught. As flawed human beings, we all fall into prideful traps from time to time. However, failing to recognize the error of pride and change course will doom our leadership. Pride is a fatal character flaw and leaders that leave legacies have their character intact. Leaders who fail to prune their pride will meet demise. That's not a guess, it's a guarantee. With pride, it's not a matter of "if" we will fall, but "when." There are no exceptions.

**Pride Hinders Us from Reaching Our Potential.**

**F**or leaders to reach full potential, they must be aware of areas in which they can improve. Unfortunately, pride blocks honest self-assessment and prevents leaders from finding the path to better performance.

## THOUGHT 85

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### **Pride Destroys Relationships.**

**T**he opposite of loving others is not hating others but rather obsessing over oneself. When we become self-absorbed, we cut ourselves off from the enjoyment of the relationships in our life. What I call, “the Celebration principle” says that the true test of relationships is not how loyal we are when friends fail, but how thrilled we are when they succeed. If we can’t get excited about the accomplishments of our friends, we had better do some soul-searching.

### **Pride Distorts Your Perspective on Reality**

**C**onstantly viewing life through the lens of selfish ambition colors a leader's outlook. Many problems in business are caused by the ego interfering with judgment. Choices that should be clear to the leader become clouded by an obsession with self advancement.

*Dave Anderson*

## THOUGHT 87

**S**elfless Loyalty. As John Baldoni writes, “for leaders to embody true loyalty, they need to put the needs of their organization ahead of personal gain.” Selfless loyalty may translate into a leader’s willingness to be the “bad guy” and sacrifice popularity for the good of the organization. Or, the leader may need to invite accountability so that he or she is less apt to wield power inappropriately. In the end, loyalty for the sake of noble principles and organizational excellence is well-worth the cost of developing and safeguarding from abuse.

*John Baldoni*

**M**anaging Good Decisions. The first ingredient of success—making good decisions—has no real value without the second, which is practicing daily discipline. Look at our society. Everyone wants to be thin, but nobody wants to diet. Everyone wants to live long, but few will exercise. Everybody wants money, yet seldom will anyone budget or control their spending.

Most people want to avoid pain, and discipline is usually painful. What we fail to understand is that there are two kinds of pain: the pain of self-discipline and the pain of regret. We avoid the pain of self-discipline because we confront it every day. Meanwhile, the pain of regret goes unnoticed for days, months, and years, but when it comes, it marks us with the profoundest disappointment.

## THOUGHT 88

Successful people conquer their feelings of instant gratification and form habits for daily discipline. They realize that the pain of self-discipline is momentary, while its payoff yields long-lasting rewards.

*John C. Maxwell*

Great leaders are unique because they have the ability to see farther and broader and bigger than their people. At the same time, however, they also have the ability to see through the eyes of their people. I've often said that the best leaders have two sets of eyes—they have leaders' eyes and they have followers' eyes. And you develop followers' eyes by doing exactly what I've been writing about—observing and listening aggressively.

*John C. Maxwell*

## THOUGHT 90

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In *Burn Brightly without Burning Out*, I have a five-part model for making wise decisions. First, give careful consideration to all the facts and options. That's what I call the logical part of a decision. Also, that's a time when if you're not familiar with something—if you see something that's too good to be true or whatever—a lot of times, you can seek out the advice of more experienced people and they will say, "I've been down that road before and it's not what it looks like." Two, pay attention to your heart, intuition and gut feeling. That's more of the emotional side. The emotion is the heart and the logic is the head, and you need both of those when you're making a decision. Three, once you make the decision, don't second-guess yourself. You simply make too many important decisions in life to waste valuable time lamenting past choices. You make

them, sometimes they don't turn out, you learn from them and you move on. Live in the present, be looking to the future, and don't let the past just completely paralyze you. Four, act with the knowledge that you'll probably make more good choices than bad ones in a lifetime. If you learn from your mistakes, I guarantee you that's true. You get smarter as you get older. So celebrate your good decisions, learn from your mistakes and over time, you'll make better decisions.

And finally, anticipate success but don't be afraid to fail. So many people are miserable in their jobs. And yet when you say, "Why don't you start your own thing?" they're too afraid to take risks. But if they get downsized or let go from their company, that's just as risky. There are three questions you can always ask yourself about this: What will happen if I don't act?

## THOUGHT 90

What are the possibilities if I do act? And if for some reason I don't succeed, what's the worst thing that could happen and can I deal with the consequences? If you decide to leave a company and go out on your own, what's the worst thing that can happen? You don't make it. So you go back to work for somebody else. That's not the end of the world. At least you tried.

*Richard Biggs*

**R**espect is vital for leadership, yet it can be difficult to discern in our leaders who have not fully developed. Peer respect doesn't reveal ability, but it shows character. . . . The following is an acronym on respect. I have found it to be a helpful device to evaluate the respectability of emerging leaders.

**R** – respect their coworkers and exhibits self-respect. Instead of asking for respect, they give it and earn it.

**E** – exceeds the expectations of others. Naturally sets the bar higher than anybody else sets it for them.

**S** – stands firm on convictions and values.

**P** – possesses maturity well beyond their years and shows self-confidence.

## THOUGHT 91

E – experiences a healthy family life.

C – contributes to the success of others.

T – thinks ahead of others. Potential leaders are marked by their ability to outpace the thinking of those around them.

*John C. Maxwell*

**Four things leaders look for in their future employees.**

1. Do they have a good value system—can you trust them?
2. Are they lifelong learners. Are they continually learning and growing?
3. Good work habits: Do they show up on time? Are they reliable? Do they get the job done?
4. Positive attitudes: They have a positive outlook on life even under tough circumstances.

*Richard Biggs*

## THOUGHT 93

Leadership is the ability to recognize the special abilities and limitations of others, combined with the capacity to set each one into the job where he will do his best.

*J. Oswald Saunders, Spiritual Leadership, 1967:127.*

**T** rue leadership differs from many theories of modern management that center around a command and control hierarchy. Compromise, consensus and teamwork are key because if leaders are to act for the people they represent, they must first listen, establish trust, discuss, debate, understand and learn. Effective communication becomes initial because it is the only way to inspire and persuade others.

*Donald Phillips*

## THOUGHT 95

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**T**ruly great leaders tend to exhibit certain personal traits that are more a part of their character, more innate. They include high ethical standards in which a person consistently attempts to do the right thing, an usually strong bias for action fueled by a high rate of personal energy and an almost uncontrollable desire to achieve and a propensity for lifelong learning curiosity and continual improvement. Many leaders also possess an unwavering self-confidence that frequently translates into courage in the face of adversity, willingness to take risks and a sense for destiny—a personal belief that they are meant for something special, perhaps even greatness.

## The Life of Saint Patrick: A Story of Forgiveness

### *Thought #96 - 98*

**Don't harbor grudges.**

**A**fter being enslaved in Ireland, you would think Patrick would have embittered at the Irish for stealing six years of his life. However, he dedicated the next 15 years to studying theology in preparation for a return trip to Ireland as a missionary. Despite being kidnaped and cruelly mistreated, Patrick chose forgiveness and showed compassion to his former captors.

## THOUGHT 97

### **Go the extra mile to make amends**

**P**atrick was not exactly a welcome visitor back in Ireland-especially when he began teaching a religion that ran contrary to the beliefs held by druid priests. However, Patrick won favor by returning to his former master and paying the full ransom price of a slave as “compensation” for his escape. This generous gesture astounded the Irish and appeased them, giving Patrick a platform to share his religious views.

It seems as if Patrick should have demanded an apology from his prior masters rather than paying them for having been a runaway slave. However, his goal wasn't to make accusations, but rather, by extending forgiveness, to acquire influence with the Irish.

**When reconciling a relationship, speak the other person's language**

**D**uring his six years of forced labor in Ireland, Patrick gained a working knowledge of the Celtic language. When he returned as a priest, he could speak directly to the Irish in their native tongue. Furthermore, Patrick understood the religious sensibilities of the druids from his time in captivity. Accordingly, he was able to communicate the message of the Christian faith in images that made sense to the Irish.

As legend has it, Patrick created the Celtic cross in an effort to connect the significance of Christ's death on the cross with the Irish people's veneration for the sun.

## THOUGHT 98

Another popular legend holds that he used the shamrock, another natural symbol, to explain the concept of the Holy Trinity. Whatever the case, Patrick's ability to deliver his message in ways the Irish could understand had a profound impact. Within a century, the entire nation of Ireland had converted to the religious faith of one of its former slaves.

**L**eaders inspire the vision of the future and set the strategy for getting there, they cause change, they motivate and inspire others to go in the right direction and they go along with every one else sacrifice to get there.

*John Kotter*

## THOUGHT 100

**E**verybody can be great because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve and you don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace; a soul generated by love.

*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you, in between the leader is a servant.

*Max Depree*