

WHAT IS A SERVANT LEADER?

7 SECRETS THAT WILL LEAD YOU TO SUCCESS

by
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Team

Servant leadership is “in.” But what does being a “servant leader” really mean? Zig Ziglar’s famous quote sums it up beautifully:

“If you help people get what they want, they will help you get what you want.” - Zig Ziglar

The heart of leadership is serving others first, before yourself. Here’s the problem, most organizations operate from a hierarchical leadership structure. Leaders “move up” the ladder in an organization, and, once there, see themselves “above” their team. Despite its trending status – as well as its undeniable success – most people do not equate leadership to service. Rather than epitomizing humility, influence and meeting people where they are at, too many leaders think being a leader means power and authority.

Here’s the good news. Some of the top performing companies like Chick-fil-A, Best Buy, UPS, Whole Foods, Starbucks, Ritz Carlton and Southwest Airlines are lead by self-described servant leaders. Their leadership qualities are people-centric, modeling servant leadership behavior and valuing service to others. They are humble – allowing their behavior to communicate their values and their appreciation for their people – and they are vigilant – in promoting the right attitude and belief systems that encourage others to succeed.

WOULD YOUR TEAM DESCRIBE YOU AS A SERVANT LEADER?

This might be a hard question to answer that might yield uncomfortable answers. But it is imperative to ask this question so you can self-correct, get the right attitude and work toward serving others using your best gifts. If your personal gain continually outweighs your desire to serve others, you are lacking the very heart of leadership – and that can be a problem – for you, your company, your family and, ultimately, your success.

John Maxwell says: “Why you lead and the way you lead are important. They define YOU, your leadership, and ultimately your contribution.”

DEFINING LEADERSHIP

John C. Maxwell, 2019 Horatio Alger award winner and named the #1 leadership guru as well as author of over 75 best-selling books on leadership, sums up the definition of leadership like this, “Leadership is influence, nothing more, nothing less.” So, if leadership is influence, you might be asking yourself, “How do I influence others?” Think about someone who positively influenced your life. What behavior or words were so impactful to you that you were influenced to become a better person? What about someone who negatively influenced your life? What behavior or words did they model and what effect did that have on you?

The point is that influence works two ways: positively or negatively. What matters most when it comes to influence is having a positive attitude. Really? Yes, it really is that simple. Your attitude is contagious and a positive attitude can shift the entire energy of an organization. Think about the last time someone with a negative attitude walked into the room you're in - you most likely "felt" that negative attitude without even having that person speak one word. That's why John emphasizes the importance of a positive attitude for leaders.

HOW'S YOUR ATTITUDE?

Once you've shifted your attitude, you can get to the business of being a great leader. Being a great leader is all about having a genuine willingness and a true commitment to lead others to achieve a common vision and goals through positive influence. No leader can ever achieve anything great or long-lasting all alone.

"Leadership is Influence, nothing more, nothing less."
- John C. Maxwell

Just because someone has the title of leader, doesn't mean they are a leader. The greatest reflection on a leader being a true leader is whether or not they are influencing anyone. And, of course, the first place you'll see that is in the leader's people. An organization is only as great as its people. If the people aren't following, the leader isn't leading. Too often leaders get too focused on the bottom line financial results instead of growing their people and the company.

To succeed, one must stand as leaders in their organizations, regardless of position, and influence the influencers. There are several factors that can attribute to emerging as a leader. Let's take a look at the seven factors highlighted in John Maxwell's book, The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership.

1 CHARACTER - WHO THEY ARE

"True leadership always begins with the inner person."

The character of a leader will filter into the entire organization and its employees. Great character will create potential for a great organization. But, it all begins with the leader's heart.

2 RELATIONSHIPS - WHO THEY KNOW

"Build the right kinds of relationships with the right people, and you can become the real leader in an organization."

In your sphere of influence, you must develop deep, meaningful relationships that go beyond seeing someone daily because you simply work in the same office. Relationships grow loyalty, influence and ultimately the business.

3 KNOWLEDGE - WHAT THEY KNOW

"Whenever I was new to an organization, I always spent a lot of time doing homework before I tried to take the lead."

New environments bring about questions to be answered. By seeking knowledge before demanding a leadership position, leaders have the chance to learn first, lead second.

4 INTUITION - WHAT THEY FEEL

"Leaders seek to recognize and influence intangibles such as energy, morale, timing, and momentum."

Leaders see past the obvious into realms that others cannot. This ability impacts the organization, as well as the people around them, as they can steer momentum down the best path with the most reward.

5 EXPERIENCE - WHERE THEY'VE BEEN

"The greater challenges you've faced as a leader in the past, the more likely followers are to give you a chance in the present."

All leaders face obstacles – in the office, at home and in their personal lives. However, through overcoming difficulties, leaders grow in great ways. By navigating through multiple tough experiences, followers will likely have more respect for where leaders have been... and where they can take the organization in the future.

6 PAST SUCCESS - WHAT THEY'VE DONE

"Every time I extended myself, took a risk, and succeeded, followers had another reason to trust my leadership ability – and to listen to what I had to say."

Past success doesn't guarantee future success, but it sure makes people feel more comfortable with being led and influenced. Find ways to take on challenges and excel in them, and you'll soon be presented with new responsibilities and leadership opportunities.

7 ABILITY - WHAT THEY CAN DO

"The bottom line for followers is what a leader is capable of. They want to know whether that person can lead the team to victory."

WHAT IS A SERVANT LEADER?

A servant leader's focus is on serving others rather than serving themselves or being served by others. A servant leader meets people where they are at so they can climb to the top alongside them rather than charging ahead. Maxwell wrote that his shift into a servant-leadership role happened when "[he] started to change his leadership focus to empowering others to do what [he] was doing." Servant leaders don't want to be successful all on their own. Servant leaders are looking to build a team not an empire, because they know once they build the team, success follows.

"When you decide to serve others as a leader, the team's success becomes your success." - John C. Maxwell

Mark Cole, CEO of John Maxwell's companies, describes servant leadership this way:

Servanthood is about *attitude*.

He explains, "We've all encountered people in service positions with poor attitudes toward servanthood: the rude worker at the government agency, the waiter who can't be bothered with taking your order, the store clerk who talks on the phone with a friend instead of helping you.

Just as you can sense when a worker doesn't want to help people, you can easily detect whether someone has a servant's heart. When you encounter a worker who has the attitude of a servant leader, everything changes."

Mark offers you three habits that will help you become a servant leader:

1 PERFORM SMALL ACTS OF KINDNESS.

As leader, it's easy to get busy and forget about the people around us. When was the last time you performed small acts of kindness for others? Start with those closest to you. Find ways today to do small things that show other people you care. You'll be blown away by the positive impact even the smallest act of kindness can have on someone.

2 LEARN TO WALK SLOWLY THROUGH THE CROWD.

I learned this great lesson from John Maxwell. The next time you attend a function with a number of clients, colleagues, or employees, make it your goal to connect with others by circulating among them slowly.

Focus on each person you meet. Learn names if you don't know them already. Make your agenda getting to know each person's needs, wants and desires.

Spending time with people creates not only the desire to serve them, but the connection and know-how to serve them well.

3 MOVE INTO ACTION.

If an attitude of servanthood is conspicuously absent from your life, the best way to change it is to start serving. Feelings will follow footsteps—if you'll begin serving with your body, your heart will eventually catch up! Then, keep at it until your heart desires to serve others well.

GETTING DOWN TO THE HEART OF IT

So, how do we get to the heart of leadership? How can we better serve others?

Maxwell offers some insight in this area in the form of some questions you can ask yourself to help with making the shift. There's eight different questions that cover the areas of adding value, every day, improvement, evaluation, the blind spot, respect, giftedness and example.

ONE: *What can I do for people to help them succeed?*

TWO: *What do people need from me daily that they may not want to ask for?*

THREE: *What can I work on that will help me serve people better?*

FOUR: *How will I know that I am serving people well?*

FIVE: *What is it like for the people who work with me?*

SIX: *How can I gain value while adding value to others by serving?*

SEVEN: *What do I do best that allows me to serve people better?*

EIGHT: *How can I serve people in a way that will inspire them to serve others?*

After entertaining those questions, doing the appropriate research, and determining the answers that best fit what your people need from you and how you can begin to serve them, you need to put your newfound servant-leadership style into action.

“A change of heart is like gratitude. If it is unexpressed, it has little value.” - John C. Maxwell

A SHORT OUTLINE OF THE MAXWELL METHOD OF LEADERSHIP CURRICULUM:

If you want to become a leader, it's important that you understand and embody the laws of what it means to be a leader.

The John Maxwell Team has trained over 20,000 coaches worldwide, and we use a rigorous leadership curriculum to ensure that you, or anyone else who joins our certification program, has all the tools necessary to increase their influence, impact, and income.

- ✓ **The “Golden Rules” Of Leadership So You Can Add Value To Others.**
- ✓ **How To Crystallize Your Vision And Galvanize Your Commitment To Your Leadership Goals.**
- ✓ **You’ll Learn Simple, Insightful Ways To Interact More Positively With Others, And Watch Your Personal And Organizational Success Go Off The Charts.**
- ✓ **Learn How To Build Up Your Sense Of Purpose And Become More Successful In Every Area Of Your Life.**
- ✓ **Discover The Keys You Need To Succeed In Life. Whether You Are A Civil Servant Or A Corporate Executive, You Will Achieve Great Things By Understanding Four Very Important Success Building Areas: Relationships, Equipping, Attitude, And Leadership.**
- ✓ **Learn The Five Principles And Five Practices To Develop The Crucial Skill Of Communicating For Connecting.**
- ✓ **How To Teach Leadership Principles To Youth So You Can Give Today’s Young People Practical Tools And Ideas To Help Them Navigate Life.**
- ✓ **And Much, Much More**

CONGRATULATIONS!

You've Finished What Is A Servant Leader, So Now What?

Whether you're looking to uplevel your career or are already an influential leader looking to make a greater impact, the John Maxwell Team can help bridge the gap between where you are and where you want to be as a leader.

Why not [schedule a free call](#) with one of our Program Coordinators to see if our program is a good fit? Sign up for a call and we'll even give you three complimentary bonuses:

1 Marketing genius Seth Godin's talk at our recent International Maxwell Certification (IMC) -- This talk is not available to the public; it's only available here.



2 Dr. Robert Cialdini's full teaching on "The Six Principles of Persuasion" (a must-listen for any coach or communicator)



3 Your choice between a session from world-renowned speaker Nick Vujicic on "Sometimes You Win, Sometimes You Learn" or from globally-recognized speaker Les Brown on "Finding Your Power Voice"



If you're ready to increase your influence, impact, and income, click here to book a call with one of our Program Coordinators.

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To your success,

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