

The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership, Jon Maxwell (2007)

These 21 Laws of Leadership develop behaviors that maximize your effectiveness. They can be learned, stand alone, carry consequences and are the foundation of leadership. THE LAW OF:

THE LID: Leadership Ability Determines a Person's Level of Effectiveness. Whatever you will accomplish is restricted by your ability to lead others. By raising your leadership ability—without increasing your success dedication—you can increase your effectiveness by 600 % in a multiplying effect. Don Stephenson, the chairman of Global Hospitality Resources, Inc., of San Diego, California, an international hospitality advisory and consulting firm often rescued hospitality companies. Whenever his people went into an organization to take it over, they started by training all the staff to improve their level of service to the customers and then fired the leader. If he'd been a good leader, the organization wouldn't be in the mess it's in.

INFLUENCE: The True Measure of Leadership is Influence. Mother Teresa spoke of unhappy parents in old people's homes who are "hurt because they are forgotten." She asked, "Are we willing to give until it hurts in order to be with our families, or do we put our own interests first?" The baby boomers in the audience began to shift in their seats. And she continued. "I feel that the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion," she said, and told them why, in uncompromising terms. For about 1.3 seconds there was silence, then applause swept the room. But not everyone clapped; the President and First Lady [Bill and Hillary Clinton], the Vice President and Mrs. Gore looked like seated statues, moving not a muscle. She didn't stop there either. When she was finished, there was almost no one she hadn't offended. But Mother Teresa was probably the most respected person on the planet at that time.

Titles don't have much value when it comes to leading. Leadership cannot be mandated. It must be earned. The only thing a title can buy is a little time—either to increase your level of influence or to undermine it. **Leadership is about influencing people** to follow, while management focuses on maintaining systems and processes. The best way to test whether a person can lead rather than just manage is to ask him to create positive change. Margaret Thatcher, the former British prime minister, observed, "Being in power is like being a lady. If you have to tell people you are, you aren't."

As soon as they no longer believe you can deliver, they stop listening and following. **The church is the most leadership-intensive enterprise in society.** Positional leadership often doesn't work in volunteer organizations. There is no leverage. In the military, leaders can use rank and throw people into the brig. In business, bosses have tremendous leverage in the form of salary, benefits, and perks.

PROCESS Leadership Develops Daily, Not in a Day. The ability to lead is really a collection of skills, nearly all of which can be learned and improved. It is the capacity to develop and improve their skills that distinguishes leaders from their followers. Successful leaders are learners. If I need to be

inspired, then I'll attend an event. If I want to improve, I'll engage in a process. Being in charge is not the same as being a leader. I wrote to the top ten leaders in my field and offered them \$100 for a half hour of their time so that I could ask them questions. They shared insights with me that I could have learned no other way.

NAVIGATION Anyone Can Steer the Ship, but It Takes a Leader to Chart the Course. If you fail to learn from your mistakes, you're going to fail again and again. The secret to the law of Navigation is preparation. **When you prepare well, you convey confidence and trust.**

ADDITION Leaders Add Value by Serving Others. Jim Sinegal is the cofounder and CEO of Costco, the fourth largest retailer in the United States and the ninth largest in the world. Costco employees are paid an average of 42 % more than the company's chief rival (Sam's Club) and has by far the lowest employee turnover rate in all of retailing. If you can't give credit (and take blame), you will drown in your inability to inspire. "If you're going to try to run an organization that's very cost-conscious, then you can't have those disparities."

The interaction between every leader and follower is a relationship, and all relationships add to or subtract from a person's life. If you are a leader, you are having either a positive or a negative impact on the people you lead. How can you tell? Are you making things better for the people who follow you? Great leadership means great service. Ben Franklin said, "The handshake of the host affects the taste of the roast."

SOLID GROUND Trust Is the Foundation of Leadership. Leaders cannot repeatedly break trust with people and continue to influence them. Your people know when you make mistakes. The question is whether you're going to fess up. If you do, you can often regain their trust. How does a leader build trust? By consistently exemplifying competence, connection, and character. They won't trust someone who slips in character. Even occasional lapses are lethal. Treat trust as your most precious asset. **Character makes trust possible.** And trust makes leadership possible. Whenever you lead people, it's as if they consent to take a journey with you. The way that trip is going to turn out is predicted by your character. With good character, the longer the trip, the better it seems. "The only thing that walks back from the tomb with the mourners and refuses to be buried is the character of a man. What a man is survives him. It can never be buried." (J R Miller)

RESPECT People Naturally Follow Leaders Stronger Than Themselves. Between 1850 and 1860, Harriet Tubman guided out more than 300 people, including many of her family members. She made 19 trips in all and never lost a single person under her care. Followers are attracted to people who are better leaders than themselves. The more leadership ability a person has, the more quickly he recognizes leadership—or its lack—in others. In time, people in the group get on board and follow the strongest leaders. **When people respect you as a person, they admire you. When they respect you as a friend,**

they love you. When they respect you as a leader, they follow you.

Dictators and other autocratic leaders rely on violence and intimidation to get people to do what they want. That's not leadership. In contrast, good leaders rely on respect. They understand that all leadership is voluntary. Followers follow them because they want to be part of success. Think about the last time you asked employees, followers, or volunteers for a commitment to something you were leading or to changing something they were doing. What was their response? In general, how readily do people rally to you in either of those situations? That can be used as an accurate gauge of your leadership level. Look at the qualities that help a leader to gain respect: Leadership ability (natural ability); Respect for others; Courage; Success record; Loyalty; Value added to others. Success is having the respect of those closest to me. Communication is intuitive for me; it's one of my greatest strengths. Who you are dictates what you see.

Intuition comes from two things: the combination of natural ability in a person's areas of strength, and learned skills. They "tune in" to leadership dynamics and are able to detect the chemistry of a team. They can tell when things are humming and when they're winding down or getting ready to grind to a halt. The principles of leadership are constant, but the application changes with every leader and situation. That's why it requires intuition.

MAGNETISM Who You Are Is Who You Attract. Leaders help to shape the culture of their organizations based on who they are and what they do. Attracting people unlike yourself requires a high degree of intentionality. To succeed at it, people must believe in you, and the vision you share must be compelling.

CONNECTION Leaders Touch a Heart Before They Ask for a Hand. You can't move people to action unless you first move them with emotion. Nothing is more effective than sincere, accurate praise, and nothing is lamer than a cookie-cutter compliment. The secret to good communication is to focus on others, not yourself. People's opinion of us has less to do with what they see in us than with what we can help them see in themselves. Napoleon Bonaparte said, "Leaders are dealers in hope." When you give people hope, you give them a future. Schwarzkopf, the Desert Storm general, used one of the most effective methods for connecting with others, something I call walking slowly through the crowd. To lead yourself, use your head; to lead others, use your heart.

THE INNER CIRCLE A Leader's Potential Is Determined by Those Closest to Him. Since no single leader can do all 21 things well, every leader needs a team of people. He finds greatness in the group, and helps the members find it in themselves. Influence the people who influence others by drawing influencers into your inner circle.

EMPOWERMENT Only Secure Leaders Give Power to Others. When I travel to developing countries, I see how alien the idea of empowerment can be to emerging leaders. In

cultures where you have to fight to make something of yourself, the assumption often is that you need to fight others to maintain your leadership. But that reflects a scarcity mind-set. Only empowered people can reach their potential. The first enemy of empowerment is fear of losing what we have. Self-conscious people are rarely good leaders. Mark Twain remarked that great things happen when you don't care who gets the credit. But you can take that a step further. The greatest things happen when you give others the credit. Great leaders gain authority by giving it away.

THE PICTURE People Do What People See. Mission provides purpose—answering the question, Why? Vision provides a picture—answering the question, What? Strategy provides a plan—answering the question, How? The higher you go in leadership, the more your work is about the future. Leaders are stewards of the vision and must also live the vision. Their effective modeling of the vision makes the picture come alive! No matter what we taught our children, they insisted on behaving like us. People do what people see. I decided that I would not teach anything I did not try to live out. Ethics can be instilled in others only if it is taught and modeled for them. "Leaders tell but never teach until they practice what they preach" (Featherstone). Leadership is more caught than taught. I have been fortunate to have had excellent leadership models from whom I have "caught" various aspects of leadership: I caught perseverance by watching my father face and overcome adversity. I caught intensity by observing Bill Hybels's passionate leadership. I caught encouragement by looking at how Ken Blanchard valued people. I caught vision by seeing Bill Bright make his vision become reality. Living what I teach is the most important thing I do as a leader. Example is leadership.

BUY-IN People Buy into the Leader, Then the Vision. The leader finds the dream and then the people. The people find the leader and then the dream. They follow worthy leaders who promote causes they can believe in. Every message that people receive is filtered through the messenger who delivers it.

VICTORY Leaders Find a Way for the Team to Win. Michael Jordan showed tenacity every time he took the court. Early in his career, Jordan relied heavily on his personal talent and efforts to win games. But as he matured, he turned his attention more to being a leader and making the whole team play better. Boston center Bill Russell measured his play by whether it helped the whole team play better. Teams succeed when the players have a unified vision and diversified skills.

THE BIG MO Momentum Is a Leader's Best Friend. Momentum is the great exaggerator. Because momentum has such a great impact, leaders try to control it. Success is exaggerated by momentum and makes leaders look better than they are. Once a leader creates some success for his organization and develops career momentum, people give him more credit than he deserves. Momentum helps followers perform better than they are. Momentum is easier to steer than to start, is the most powerful change agent, and is the leader's responsibility.

Momentum begins within the individual leader and starts with vision, passion, and enthusiasm. You cannot kindle a fire in any other heart until it is burning within your own.

PRIORITIES Leaders Understand That Activity Is Not Necessarily Accomplishment. I decided that if I was going to live consistently with the priorities I had established for myself, I was going to have to move myself and my companies to one of the hub cities to cut travel time. Every year I spend about two weeks in December reevaluating my priorities. Focus your attention on the activities that rank in the top 20% in terms of importance, you will have an 80% return on your effort. My three Rs are requirement, return, and reward. What must I do that nobody can or should do for me? As I have gotten older, that list has gotten shorter and shorter. It was never John Wooden's goal to win championships or even to beat the other team. His desire was to get each person to play to his potential and to put the best possible team on the floor.

SACRIFICE A Leader Must Give Up to Go Up. The life of a leader can look glamorous to people on the outside. But the reality is that Leadership requires sacrifice. To be able to compete in both figure skating and piano competitions, Condoleezza Rice would get up at 4:30 in the morning to fit everything in. Then she attended the Aspen Music Festival and realized that, as hard as she had worked, she might not make it to the top. She observed, "I met 11-year-olds who could play from sight what had taken me all year to learn. She dropped her major and began searching for a new field. She found it in international politics. She was drawn to the Russian culture and the Soviet government. She found her passions in Soviet studies and teaching, and her life at Stanford was rich on many levels. She juggled classes, advising, research, writing, playing the piano, weight training, exercising, dating, and gluing herself to the television for 12-hour football-watching marathons. Then in 1989, the White House called. She was invited to accept a position on the National Security Council as the director of Soviet and East European affairs. She helped create policy for the reunification of Germany. As the second in command at one of the world's premier universities, Rice had it made. She had proven herself as an executive. She was already sitting on many corporate boards. And she was in position to become president of any university in the nation. So some were surprised when she stepped down as provost and began tutoring George W. Bush, then governor of Texas, on foreign policy. But it was a sacrifice she was willing to make—one that led to her becoming national security advisor and eventually U.S. secretary of state.

TIMING When to Lead Is As Important As What to Do and Where to Go. People who are naturally entrepreneurial often possess a strong sense of timing.

EXPLOSIVE GROWTH To Add Growth, Lead Followers— To Multiply, Lead Leaders. When people asked me to help them be more successful, I focused on teaching per-

sonal growth. In nations where there is no strong business infrastructure and government doesn't allow the citizens much freedom, it is difficult for leaders to develop. EQUIP—encouraging qualities undeveloped in people. Leaders are naturally impatient. Leaders who develop leaders give rewards, resources, and responsibility based on results. **Leaders are like eagles—they don't flock.** What you're doing has to be more compelling than what they're already doing. Most organizations desire stability but leaders want excitement.

LEGACY A Leader's Lasting Value Is Measured by Succession. The "life sentence" is a statement summarizing the goal and purpose of one's life. There is often a natural progression to how leaders develop in the area of legacy, starting with the desire to achieve: Achievement comes when they do big things by themselves. Success comes when they empower followers to do big things for them. Significance comes when they develop leaders to do great things with them. Legacy comes when they put leaders in position to do great things without them.

SUMMARY Everything Rises and Falls on Leadership. Personnel determine the potential of the organization. Relationships determine the morale of the organization. Structure determines the size of the organization. Vision determines the direction of the organization. Leadership determines the success of the organization. Become a 360-Degree Leader. Learn to lead up, across, and down your organization and space.

[John Maxwell's 21 Laws are useful but differ from Christ as a Leadership model.] **When people respect you as a person, they admire you. When they respect you as a friend, they love you. When they respect you as a leader, they follow you. Followers follow because they want to be part of success. People's opinion of us has less to do with what they see in us than with what we can help them see in themselves. Leaders are dealers in hope. When you give people hope, you give them a future. Great leaders gain authority by giving it away. No matter what we teach our children, they insist on behaving like us. People do what people see. Ethics can be instilled in others only if it is taught and modeled for them. Living what I teach is the most important thing I do as a leader. Example is leadership. Teams succeed when the players have a unified vision and diversified skills. Every message that we receive is filtered through the messenger who delivers it.**