

CAPACITY: LEADERSHIP



Young professionals can grow their influence and increase their leadership capacity without having the title. Leadership guru John Maxwell said, “Great leaders know that leadership is not about authority or a title. It is about influence, nothing more and nothing less.” You don’t need to have the title to lead. But you do need to be “humble, hungry, and hustle” as leadership author Brad Lomenick unpacks in his book for young professionals, *H3 Leadership*.

Profile of a great leader

In his book, *The Best Practices Of Great Leaders*, Clinton Longenecker identifies common attributes of great leaders. The best leaders are driven by the mission and results. They can balance concern for tasks and getting things done with great concern for their people. They have the competency and know-how to get their work done with excellence, constantly driven by learning how to improve their skills. Leaders are readers. Great leaders take the time to plan and equip their people for success. They possess excellence in character, being trustworthy, dependable, transparent, and people of integrity. Great leaders let people know exactly what is expected of them and give them the authority to act. They remove barriers and make it easier for their people to get their work done and succeed. Great leaders utilize their emotional intelligence to create synergies with their people by connecting individually and in teams. They provide employees with feedback that is timely, ongoing, and balanced, coaching them in their development. Good leaders see themselves as stewards of the company’s time, talent, and treasure, being careful not to be wasteful, but seeking a good return on investment of those resources. Finally, these leaders bring excitement and energy to their role.

Ready for promotion

Baton Exchange

In her article *Becoming a Manager: 18 Signs Your Employee is Ready*, Sam Campbell offers insights into what employers may be looking for when they want to promote an employee to leadership. For one, the employee is already demonstrating positive influence on other employees. They get along with people, are self-motivated, and have a great attitude. They are engaged with their work, like to learn, and volunteer for the tough jobs. Leaning toward the team rather than themselves, practicing good communications skills, and fixating on solutions are indicators of promotability. These promotable employees seek out expert input, set goals for themselves, and don't micromanage the affairs of others. They take responsibility, have empathy, and eagerly accept opportunities to lead. Finally, promotable employees are professional and work with integrity.

Redemptive Influencers Serve

Redemptive influencers, godly leaders, serve. "Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him... When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." (John 13:3-5, 12-17 NIV)

Serving comes up many times in scripture. Jesus said, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." (Mark 9:35) And "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45) The apostle Paul reminded the church at Galatia on the *motivation* for serving, "For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." (Galatians 5:13) In Philippians 2:3,5-7

God created people to lead and to serve. But serving can be difficult because it's so counter to our fallen, self-centered nature. But Paul reminded the Believers to "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves...Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."

So how does one increase their leadership capacity through serving? Consider practicing the below SERVE acrostic.

See. See a need. Look for and develop awareness of the needs of those around you.

Engage. Engage the person in need in conversation. Do they want help? How do they want help? Listen with humility.

Respond. Respond to the need- in the way that best helps them.

Voluntary and Voluminous. Help generously, willingly, freely, joyfully, expecting nothing in return.

Excel & Exceed. Serve with excellence in skill (do your best with what you have), attitude, and timeliness and exceed expectations.

Practicing the SERVE model is something you can begin doing immediately, no matter if you aren't leading anyone or if you're the CEO. If you make a habit of practicing this model, you will increase your influence with your boss, peers, subordinates, community, and key relationships.

Baton Exchange

God created people to lead- it is inherent in His Creation mandate. However, our broken sinful nature can distort *how* and *why* we lead. We need to allow Christ to redeem and transform our heart and mind on an ongoing basis to be more effective and productive leaders. Ones to whom He will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" In other words, to be a godly leader and influencers of others, we need to be a godly follower of Christ, allowing him to influence and change our head, heart, hands (behaviors), and habits. We need to realign with His way of being and doing and trust him with the process.

Godly leaders serve. Anyone can serve. To build your leadership capacity and redemptive influence, practice serving.

Other areas to explore developing your leadership capacity include:

Situational leadership
Overcoming Barriers to Effective Leadership
Failing Forward, Growth Mindset
Relational Connection
Facilitating Groups
Communicating Leader
Collaborative Leader
Holy Spirit-led Leader
Leader Habits
Thinking Like a Leader
Loving Like a Leader

"He who is not a good servant will not be a good master." Plato

Ask Your Mentor

1. What has been your leadership journey?
2. How have you aligned your leadership to God's way of doing things?
3. How have you had to trust God as a leader?
4. How have you demonstrated a learner mentality to help you excel as a leader?
5. What is the hardest part about leading? What do you enjoy about it?
6. What would you tell your younger self about leadership? What would you do the same? Differently?
7. What are the attributes of a promotable employee? Why are these attributes important to you?

Go Do

What's a personal growth area you noticed for yourself in this reading?

What's one specific way that you can practice servant leadership in the coming weeks? What's your action step. What would it look like to trust in Him with that as you obey?

Go Deeper: Further Conversation & Study

- 1.
2. Who are some of your favorite leadership authors or books?
3. What role do peers and mentors play in your leadership journey?
4. What types of employees or peers have the most influence with you and why?
5. I'm faced with a leadership issue at work. (Describe it to your mentor.) Have you faced something similar? What did you do? How did it turn out? What would you do differently?
6. Is there anything that you would like to role play with your mentor to work through it?

Sources & Resources

Book- Lead Like Jesus, Ken Blanchard

Book- 360° Leader, John Maxwell

Book- The Best Practices Of Great Leaders, Clinton Longenecker

Article- Becoming a Manager: 18 Signs Your Employee is Ready by Sam Campbell,

<https://wheniwork.com/blog/becoming-a-manager-18-signs-your-employee-is-ready/>

Video- One Minute Manager, Ken Blanchard, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifENaaz3IfQ>

Baton Exchange

Video- How do you integrate faith, work and leadership?, Tiffany Crosby,

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/152228992>

Audio- One Minute Manager, Ken Blanchard, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8TZdrYKYJ8>