

The One Minute Manager: Overview



Capacity: Leadership

Baton Exchange

In today's fast-paced world, effective leadership often seems complex and time-consuming. *The One Minute Manager* by Kenneth Blanchard and Spencer Johnson revolutionized leadership thinking by teaching that effective management can be simple, concise, and focused—without sacrificing relationships or outcomes. Its principles—goal setting, praising, and reprimanding—align closely with biblical truths, providing a framework for leaders to shepherd others with wisdom, clarity, and love.

From a biblical perspective, leadership is not simply about productivity, authority, or efficiency; it is stewardship. Leaders are entrusted with people, resources, and influence, called to guide, serve, and equip others as Jesus did (Mark 10:42–45). This article explores the principles of the One Minute Manager through a faith-driven lens, practical best practices, and the benefits of integrating these methods into your leadership.

BIBLICAL PRECEPTS FOR THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER

1. Goal Setting with Clarity and Purpose

The One Minute Manager teaches that clear goals empower people. This aligns with Proverbs 16:3: “*Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.*” Leaders should define outcomes, expectations, and values, ensuring they are grounded in God's will.

2. Praise and Affirmation

Scripture repeatedly emphasizes encouragement. Hebrews 3:13 exhorts believers to “*encourage one another daily.*” Recognizing effort and success nurtures morale, strengthens relationships, and motivates faithful service.

3. Correction with Grace and Truth

The One Minute Reprimand mirrors biblical correction. Proverbs 27:5–6 says, “*Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Wounds from a friend can be trusted.*” Timely, loving correction cultivates growth and integrity.

4. Servant Leadership

Jesus said, “*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 One Minute Manager's principles are a practical application of servant leadership: serving, guiding, and nurturing people while maintaining accountability.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER

The One Minute Manager is built on **three key techniques**:

1. One Minute Goals

- Clearly define what success looks like.
- Ensure employees understand expectations.
- Keep goals concise and measurable.

Biblical Principle: God values clarity and accountability (Habakkuk 2:2). Leaders who clearly communicate expectations enable people to excel without confusion or fear.

2. One Minute Praisings

- Give immediate, specific recognition for good work.
- Reinforce positive behavior to encourage repetition.

Biblical Principle: Praise nurtures hearts (1 Thessalonians 5:11). Recognizing effort demonstrates love and fosters trust.

3. One Minute Reprimands

- Correct promptly and specifically.
- Separate behavior from identity—love the person, address the mistake.
- Reaffirm commitment to the individual afterward.

Biblical Principle: Discipline is an act of love (Proverbs 3:11–12). Correction strengthens character and stewardship of people.

BEST PRACTICES FOR A BIBLICAL ONE MINUTE MANAGER

1. Pray Before You Lead

Seek wisdom and discernment (James 1:5). Before setting goals, giving praise, or correcting, ask God to guide your words, motives, and timing.

2. Keep It Concise

One Minute techniques are short but impactful. Avoid long-winded lectures or over-analysis. Be direct, clear, and respectful.

3. Practice Consistency

Consistency in praise, correction, and goal-setting builds credibility and trust. People know they can rely on your integrity and fairness.

4. Focus on Behavior, Not the Person

Critique actions and decisions, not character. Jesus modeled this—He corrected sin but loved the sinner (John 8:1–11).

5. Encourage Self-Reflection

After a reprimand or praise, invite employees to reflect on what went well or what can improve. Encourage ownership of growth.

6. Model the Way

Lead by example. Demonstrate diligence, integrity, humility, and faith in action. Your behavior sets the standard for those you lead (1 Corinthians 11:1).

BENEFITS OF PRACTICING THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER

1. Clear Communication

Employees understand expectations and goals. Misunderstandings decrease and focus increases.

2. Increased Motivation

Immediate praise reinforces positive behavior, boosts morale, and encourages excellence.

3. Faster Growth

Timely correction enables individuals to learn from mistakes, building competence and character quickly.

4. Stronger Relationships

Praise, correction, and goal alignment nurture trust, loyalty, and respect. Leaders connect with people personally and professionally.

5. Biblical Stewardship

Applying One Minute principles reflects biblical leadership—serving others, guiding them wisely, and fostering spiritual and professional growth.

6. Efficient Use of Time

Short, intentional interactions free leaders to address strategic priorities without neglecting relational needs.

ASK YOUR MENTOR

1. How did practicing clear goal-setting impact your leadership effectiveness?
 2. How do you balance timely praise with not overpraising?
 3. What strategies help you deliver correction with grace and truth?
 4. How do you ensure goals and feedback align with God's purposes?
 5. What mistakes did you make early in implementing One Minute techniques?
 6. How can these principles be applied in a faith-based or secular environment?
 7. How do you maintain humility while leading others effectively?
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Self-Rate

Rate yourself 1–5 (1 = rarely true, 5 = consistently true):

Do I set clear, measurable goals for those I lead?	
How often do I provide immediate praise for good work?	
Do I address mistakes quickly and with love?	
Am I modeling integrity, humility, and servant leadership?	
Do my interactions build trust and strengthen relationships?	
Are my leadership practices aligned with biblical principles?	
How effectively do I balance accountability with encouragement?	

Creative Connection and/or Role Play

Think of a song, character or person from a book, movie or history, or an everyday item that personifies the main idea of this lesson and share it. Or, if applicable to this lesson, role play a practice from this article with your mentor.

Reflect and Journal

Spend 10–15 minutes writing prayerfully: “Lord, In what areas can I become a One Minute Manager who leads with both excellence and Christlike love? How can I better encourage, correct, and set goals in alignment with Your purposes?” Consider your habits, motives, and patterns of communication. Ask God to reveal blind spots and next steps.

Action Step

This week, implement one of the One Minute Manager techniques intentionally:

- **Set One Minute Goals:** Define a clear, measurable goal with a team member.
- **Give One Minute Praise:** Identify and immediately recognize good work.
- **Deliver One Minute Reprimand:** Correct a specific behavior with love and clarity.

Pray before and after the interaction and reflect on how it strengthened the relationship or performance.

Sources & Resources

- *The One Minute Manager* — Kenneth Blanchard & Spencer Johnson
- Holy Bible (NIV, ESV)
- Blanchard, Ken & Hodges, Phil. *Lead Like Jesus*
- *The 5 Levels of Leadership* — John C. Maxwell