

# **The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership**

**By John C. Maxwell**

**A Condensed Summary**  
[www.daralarqam.co.uk](http://www.daralarqam.co.uk)

“The greatest day in your life and mine  
is when we take total responsibility  
for our attitudes. That's the day we  
truly grow up.”

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. The Law of the Lid	4
2. The Law of Influence	5
3. The Law of Process	7
4. The Law of Navigation	8
5. The Law of Addition	10
6. The Law of Solid Ground	12
7. The Law of Respect	13
8. The Law of Intuition	15
9. The Law of Magnetism	16
10. The Law of Connection	18
11. The Law of Inner Circle	19
12. The Law of Empowerment	20
13. The Law of Picture	21
14. The Law of Buy-In	22
15. The Law of Victory	23
16. The Law of Big Mo	25
17. The Law of Priorities	26
18. The Law of Sacrifice	27
19. The Law of Timing	28
20. The Law of Explosive Growth	29
21. The Law of Legacy	30

# 1. The Law of the Lid

## Leadership Ability Determines a Person's Level of Effectiveness

Leadership ability is the lid that determines a person's level of effectiveness. Your leadership ability always determines your effectiveness and the potential impact of your organization.

Let's say you're an 8 on a scale from 1 to 10. But let's say that your leadership ability is a 1. Your level of effectiveness would look like figure 1.0.

Now, let's say you become a real student of leadership and you maximize your potential, taking it all the way up to a 7. Visually it would look like 1.1.

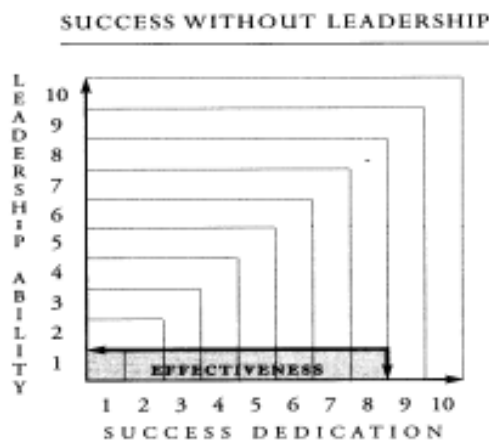


Figure 1.0

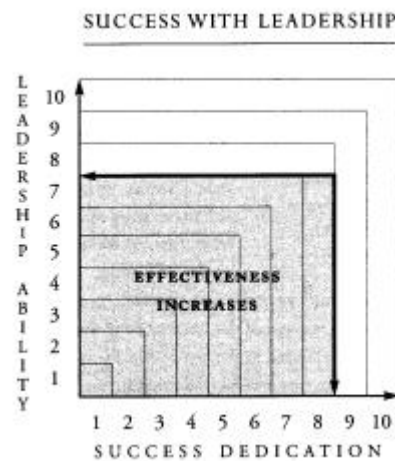


Figure 1.1

By raising your leadership ability – without increasing your dedication at all – you can increase your original effectiveness by 600 percent. Leadership has a multiplying effect.

Smart, talented people are able to go so far because of the limitations of their leadership. To reach the highest level of effectiveness, you have to raise your leadership lid.

## 2. The Law of Influence

### **The True Measure of Leadership is Influence – Nothing More, Nothing Less**

True leadership cannot be awarded, appointed, or assigned. It comes only from influence, and that cannot be mandated. It must be earned.

#### **Five myths about leadership**

**1) The Management Myth** – that leading and managing are the same. Leadership is about influencing people to follow, while management focuses on maintaining systems and processes. Managers can maintain direction; to move people you need influence.

**2) The Entrepreneur Myth** – entrepreneurs are skilled at seeing opportunities and going after them. But not all of them are good at leading people in their vision.

**3) The Knowledge Myth** – neither IQ nor education necessarily equates to leadership.

**4) The Pioneer Myth** – being a trendsetter is not the same as being a leader. To be a leader, a person has to not only be out in front, but also has to have people following his lead.

**5) The Position Myth** – leadership is not based on rank or title. It's not the position that makes the leader; it's the leader that makes the position.

#### **Several factors that make a leader**

**1) Character** – *Who They Are* – true leadership always begins with the inner person. People can sense the depth of a person's character.

**2) Relationships** – *Who They Know* – with deep relationships with the right people you can become the real leader in an organization.

**3) Knowledge** – *What They Know* – information is vital. You need a grasp of the facts to develop an accurate vision for the future.

**4) Intuition** – *What They Feel* – leaders seek to recognize and influence intangibles such as energy, morale, timing and momentum.

**5) Experience** – *Where They've Been* – the greater your past challenges, the more likely followers will be willing to let you lead.

**6) Ability** – *What They Can Do* – the bottom line is followers want to know whether you can lead them to victory. As soon as they no longer believe you can deliver, they will stop following.

### 3. The Law of Process

#### Leadership Develops Daily, Not in a Day

Leaders require seasoning to be effective. If you continually invest in your leadership development, the inevitable is growth over time.

The relationship between growth and leadership: It's the capacity to develop and improve one's skills that distinguishes leaders from their followers.

Successful leaders are learners. And the learning process is ongoing, a result of self-discipline and perseverance.

#### The phases of leadership growth

**Phase 1:** *I Don't Know What I Don't Know* – few think of themselves as leaders and as long as a person doesn't know the importance of leadership he isn't going to grow.

**Phase 2:** *I Know That I Need to Know* – at some point we discover we need to learn how to lead.

**Phase 3:** *I Know What I Don't Know* – if we don't get better at leadership, our careers will eventually get bogged down. In this phase you develop a plan for personal growth on areas you need improvement.

**Phase 4:** *I Know and Grow and It Starts to Show* – when you recognize your lack of skill and begin the daily discipline of personal growth, exciting things start to happen. You start becoming an effective leader but you have to think about every move you make.

**Phase 5:** *I Simply Go Because of What I Know* – your ability to lead becomes almost automatic. You develop great instincts which results in incredible payoffs. But the only way to get there is to obey the Law of Process and pay the price.

Benjamin Disraeli asserted, "The secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his time when it comes."

There is an old saying: champions don't become champions in the ring – they are merely recognized there. That's true. If you want to see where someone develops into a champion, look at his daily routine.

## 4. The Law of Navigation

### Anyone Can Steer the Ship, but It Takes a Leader to Chart the Course

First-rate navigators always have in mind that other people are depending on them and their ability to chart a good course.

Before good leaders take their people on a journey, they go through a process in order to give the trip the best chance of being a success:

- **Navigators draw on past experience** – every past success and failure you’ve experienced can be a valuable source of information and wisdom. Success teaches you what you’re capable of doing and gives you confidence. However, your failures can often teach greater lessons, if you allow them to. If you fail to learn from your mistakes, you’re going to fail again and again.
- **Navigators examine the conditions before making commitments** – No good leader plans a course of action without paying attention to current conditions. Good navigators count the cost before making commitments for themselves and others.
- **Navigators listen to what others have to say** – Navigating Leaders get ideas from many sources. They listen to members of their leadership team. They spend time with leaders of other organizations who can mentor them. They always think in terms of relying on a team, not just themselves.
- **Navigators make sure their conclusions represent both faith and fact** – A leader has to possess a positive attitude. If you can’t confidently make the trip in your mind, you’re not going to be able to take it in real life. On the other hand, you also have to be able to see the facts realistically. If you don’t go in with your
- eyes wide open, you’re going to get blindsided. Balancing optimism and realism, faith and fact can be very difficult.
- **Charting a course with a navigation strategy** – here’s an acrostic that the author used repeatedly in his leadership.

**P**redetermine a course of action.

**L**ay out your goals.

**A**adjust your priorities.

**N**otify key personnel.

**A**llow time for acceptance.

**H**ead into action.

**E**xpect problems.

**A**lways point to the successes.

**D**aily review your plan.



The secret to the Law of Navigation is preparation. When you prepare well, you convey confidence and trust to people. Leaders who are good navigators are capable of taking their people just about anywhere.

## 5. The Law of Addition

### Leaders Add Value by Serving Others

**Adding profits by adding value** – Costco’s CEO, Jim Sinegal, believes the success of Costco comes from treating his employees well.

- Costco employees are paid an average of 42% more than the company’s chief rival and they also receive generous health care coverage.
- Sinegal shows he cares and respects his employees – he has an open-door policy. He is on a first-name basis with everyone.
- Sinegal’s salary is well below what other CEO’s of similar size company’s make because he is more focused on serving his employees than making an exorbitant salary.
- The result: Costco has by far the lowest employee turnover rate in all of retailing.

The bottom line in leadership isn’t how far we advance ourselves but how far we advance others.

There is one critical question: Are you making things better for the people who follow you?

If you can’t answer with an unhesitant yes, then you likely aren’t.

90% of all people who add value to others do so intentionally. Why do I say that? Because human beings are often cultured to be selfish. Being an adder requires me to think about adding value to others.

**Adding value, changing lives** – four guidelines for adding value to others.

**1) Truly value others** – effective leaders go beyond not harming others, they intentionally help others. They must value people and demonstrate they care in such a way that their followers know it.

**2) Make yourself more valuable to others** – the more intentionally you have been in growing personally, the more you have to offer your followers.

**3) Know and relate to what others value** – this can only come by listening to your people’s stories, their hopes and dreams. Learn what is valuable to them and then lead based on what you’ve learned.

**4) Do things that God values** – God desires us not only to treat people with respect, but also to actively reach out to them and serve them.

The attitude of the leader affects the atmosphere of the office. If you desire to add value by serving others, you will become a better leader. And your people will achieve more, develop more loyalty, and have a better time getting things done than you ever thought possible. That's the power of the Law of Addition.

## 6. The Law of Solid Ground

### Trust Is the Foundation of Leadership

Trust is the foundation of leadership. It is the most important thing. Leaders cannot repeatedly break trust with people and continue to influence them.

Your people know when you make mistakes. The real 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. People will forgive occasional mistakes on ability. And they will give you time to connect. But they won't trust someone who has slips in character.

**Character communicates** – a person's character quickly communicates many things to others. Here are the most important ones:

- **Character communicates consistency** – leaders without inner strength can't be counted on day after day because their ability to perform changes constantly.
- **Character communicates potential** – weak character is limiting. Who do you think has the greater potential to achieve great dreams: someone who is honest, disciplined, and hardworking or someone who is deceitful, impulsive and lazy?
- **Character communicates respect** – When you don't have character within, you can't earn respect without. How do leaders earn respect? By making sound decisions, by admitting their mistakes, and by putting what's best for their followers and the organization ahead of their personal agendas.

No leader can break trust with his people and expect to keep influencing them. Trust is the foundation of leadership. Violate the Law of Solid Ground, and you diminish your influence as a leader.

## 7. The Law of Respect

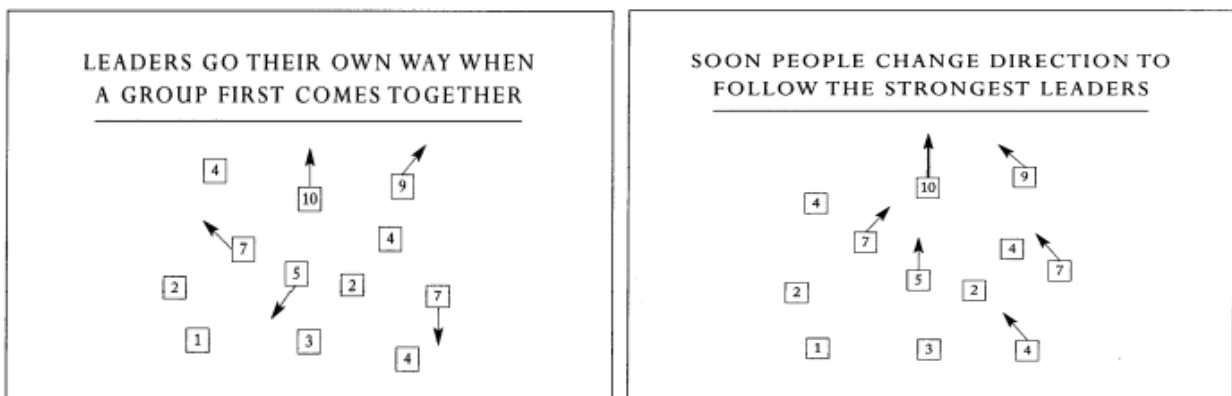
### People Naturally Follow Leaders Stronger Than Themselves

People naturally follow leaders stronger than themselves. That's how the Law of Respect works.

People don't follow others by accident. People who are an 8 in leadership don't look for a 6 to follow – they naturally follow a 9 or 10. The less skilled follow the more highly skilled and gifted.

Occasionally, a strong leader may choose to follow someone weaker than himself. But when that happens, it's for a reason. For example, the stronger leader may do it out of respect for the person's office/post or past accomplishments. Or he may be following the chain of command. In general though, followers are attracted to people who are better leaders than themselves.

When people get together for the first time in a group, take a look at what happens. As they start interacting, the leaders in the group immediately take charge. But after the people get to know one another, it doesn't take long for them to recognize the strongest leaders and to start following them.



In time, people in the group get on board and follow the strongest leaders. Either that or they leave the group to pursue their own agenda.

#### **Top six ways that leaders gain others' respect**

**1) Natural leadership ability** – if you possess it, people will want to follow you. They will become excited when you communicate vision.

**2) Respect for others** – when leaders show respect for others – especially for people who have less power or a lower position than theirs – they gain respect from others. If you continually respect others and consistently lead them well, you will continue to have followers.

**3) Courage** – Good leaders do what's right, even at the risk of failure, in the face of great danger and under the brunt of relentless criticism. Can you think of one great leader from history who was without courage? A leader's courage gives his followers hope.

**4) Success** – When leaders succeed in leading the team to victory, then followers believe they can do it again. As a result, followers follow them because they want to be part of success in the future.

**5) Loyalty** – When leaders stick with the team until the job is done and look out for their followers best interests even when it hurts them personally, followers will in turn learn to respect them.

**6) Value added to others** – Followers value leaders who add value to them and their respect for them carries on long after the relationship has ended.

## 8. The Law of Intuition

### Leaders Evaluate Everything with a Leadership Bias

The Law of Intuition is based on facts coupled with instincts plus other intangible factors, such as employee morale, organizational momentum, and relationship dynamics.

The Law of Intuition often separates the great leaders from the merely good ones.

Leadership intuition is the ability of a leader to read what's going on. For that reason, I say that leaders are readers:

**1) Leaders are readers of their situation** – leaders pick up on details that might elude others. They sense people's attitudes. They are able to detect the chemistry of a team. They know the situation before they have all the facts.

**2) Leaders are readers of trends** – leaders discern where the organization is headed, often times they sense it first and find data later to explain it. Their intuition tells them that something is happening, that conditions are changing. Leaders must always be a few steps ahead of their people, or they're not really leading.

**3) Leaders are readers of their resources** – leaders think in terms of resources and how to maximize them for the benefit of their organization. They are continually aware of what they have at their disposal.

**4) Leaders are readers of people** – Intuition helps leaders sense what's happening among people and know their hopes, fears and concerns. Reading people is perhaps the most important intuitive skill leaders can possess.

**5) Leaders are readers of themselves** – leaders must know not only their own strengths and weaknesses, but also their current state of mind. Why? Because leaders can hinder progress just as easily as they can help create it.

Without intuition, leaders get blindsided, and that's one of the worst things that can happen to a leader. If you want to lead well, and stay ahead of others, you've got to obey the Law of Intuition.

## **9. The Law of Magnetism**

### **Who You Are Is Who You Attract**

In most situations, you draw people to you who possess the same qualities you do. Who you are is who you attract. If you want to attract better people, become the kind of person you desire to attract.



# 10. The Law of Connection

## Leaders Touch a Heart Before They Ask for a Hand

For leaders to be effective, they need to connect with people. All great leaders recognize this truth and act on it almost instinctively. You can't move people to action unless you first move them with emotion.

"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." You develop credibility with people when you connect with them and show that you genuinely care and want to help them. And as a result, they usually respond in kind and want to help you.

### How do you connect with people?

**1) Connect with yourself** – If you don't believe in who you are and where you want to lead, work on that before doing anything else.

**2) Communicate with openness and sincerity** – People can smell a phony a mile away. Authentic leaders connect.

**3) Know your audience** – When you work with individuals, knowing your audience means learning people's names, finding out their histories, asking about their dreams. When you communicate to an audience, you learn about the organization and its goals. You want to speak about what they care about.

**4) Live your message** – Practice what you preach. That's where credibility comes from.

**5) Go to where they are** – Remove as many barriers to communication as possible. Try to be attuned to their culture, background, education, and so on. Adapt to others; don't expect them to adapt to me.

**6) Focus on them, not yourself** – Focus on others, not yourself. That is the number one problem of inexperienced speakers and ineffective leaders.

**7) Believe in them** – It's one thing to communicate to people because you believe you have something of value to say. It's another to communicate with people because you believe they have value. People's opinions of us have less to do with what they see in us than with what we can help them see in themselves.

**8) Give them hope** – French general Napoleon Bonaparte said, "Leaders are dealers in hope." When you give people hope, you give them a future.

Successful leaders who obey the Law of Connection are always initiators. They take the first step with others and then make the effort to continue building relationships. It's not always easy, but it's important to the success of the organization. A leader has to do it, no matter how many obstacles there might be.

You connect with others when you learn their names, make yourself available to them, tell them how much you appreciate them, find out what they are doing, and most important, listen to them.

There's an old saying: To lead yourself, use your head; to lead others, use your heart. That's the nature of the Law of Connection. Always touch a person's heart before you ask for a hand.

# 11. The Law of the Inner Circle

## A Leader's Potential Is Determined by Those Closest to Him

Nobody does anything great alone, nor do leaders succeed alone. What makes the difference is the leader's inner circle.

As you consider whether individuals should be in your inner circle, ask yourself the following questions. If you can answer yes to these questions, then they are excellent candidates for your inner circle:

**1) Do they have high influence with others?** – One key to successful leadership is the ability to influence the people who influence others. How do you do that? By drawing influencers into your inner circle.

**2) Do they bring a complementary gift to the table?** – Bring a few key people into your inner circle who possess strengths in your areas of weakness.

**3) Do they hold a strategic position in the organization?** – Some people belong in your inner circle because of their importance to the organization. If you and they are not working on the same page, the entire organization is in trouble.

**4) Do they add value to me and to the organization?** – The people in your inner circle must add value to you personally. They should also have a proven track record as assets to the organization. Seek for your inner circle people who help you improve.

**5) Do they positively impact other inner circle members?** – Team chemistry is vital. You want your inner circle to have a good fit with one another. You also want inner circle members to make one another better, to raise one another's game.

Once you've reached your capacity in time and energy, the only way you can increase your impact is through others. Surround yourself with high performers that extend your influence beyond your reach and help you to grow and become a better leader.

# 12. The Law of Empowerment

## Only Secure Leaders Give Power to Others

If you want to be successful, you have to be willing to empower others.

Theodore Roosevelt once said: “The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and the self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it.”

When leaders fail to empower others, it is usually due to three main reasons:

**1) Desire for job security** – The number one enemy of empowerment is the fear of losing what we have. Weak leaders worry that if they help subordinates, they themselves will become dispensable. Rather they should realize that if the teams they lead always seem to succeed, people will figure out that they are leading them well.

**2) Resistance to change** – Most people don’t like change. As a leader, you must train yourself to embrace change, to desire it, to make a way for it. Effective leaders are not only willing to change; they become change agents.

**3) Lack of self-worth** – Self-conscious people are rarely good leaders. They focus on themselves, worrying how they look, what others think, whether they are liked. They can’t give power to others because they feel that they have no power themselves. The best leaders have a strong self-worth. They believe in themselves, their mission and their people.

Strange as it sounds, great leaders gain authority by giving it away. If you aspire to be a great leader, you must live by the Law of Empowerment.

# 13. The Law of the Picture

## People Do What People See

When leaders show the way with their right actions, their followers copy their good example and succeed.

Great leaders are both highly visionary and highly practical. Their vision helps them see beyond the immediate. They can envision what's coming and what must be done. Leaders possess an understanding how:

- Mission provides purpose – answering the question, *Why?*
- Vision provides a picture – answering the question, *What?*
- Strategy provides a plan – answering the question, *How?*

As author Hans Finzel observed, “Leaders are paid to be dreamers. The higher you go in leadership, the more your work is about the future.”

As you strive to become a better example to your followers, remember these things.

**1) Followers are always watching what you do** – Just as children watch their parents and emulate their behaviour, so do employees watch their bosses. If the boss comes in late, then employees feel they can too. Nothing is more convincing than living out what you say you believe.

**2) It's easier to teach what's right than to do what's right** – Nothing is more convincing than people who give good advice and set a good example.

**3) We should work on changing ourselves before trying to improve others** – A great danger to good leadership is the temptation to try to change others without first making changes to yourself. To remain a credible leader, you must always work first, hardest and longest on changing yourself; this is essential. If we work on improving ourselves our primary mission, then others are more likely to follow.

**4) The most valuable gift a leader can give is being a good example** – More than anything else, employees want leaders whose beliefs and actions line up. Leadership is more caught than taught. How does one “catch” leadership? By watching good leaders in action.

# **14. The Law of 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. That's how the Law of Buy-In works.

People don't at first follow worthy causes. They follow worthy leaders who promote worthy causes they can believe in. People buy into the leader first, then the leader's vision.

As a leader, having a great vision and a worthy cause is not enough to get people to follow you. You have to become a better leader; you must get your people to buy into you. That is the price you have to pay if you want your vision to have a chance of becoming reality. You cannot ignore the Law of Buy-In and remain successful as a leader.

# 15. The Law of Victory

## Leaders Find a Way for the Team to Win

Victorious leaders have one thing in common: they share an unwillingness to accept defeat. The alternative to winning is totally unacceptable to them. As a result, they figure out what must be done to achieve victory.

The best leaders feel compelled to rise to a challenge and do everything in their power to achieve victory for their people. In their view...

- Losing is unacceptable.
- Passion is unquenchable.
- Quitting is unthinkable.
- Commitment is unquestionable.
- Victory is inevitable.

With that mindset, they embrace the vision and approach the challenges with the resolve to take their people to victory.

Three factors that contribute to a team's dedication to victory:

**1) Unity of vision** – Teams succeed only when the players have a unified vision, no matter how much talent or potential there is.

**2) Diversity of skills** – Every organization requires diverse talents to succeed.

**3) A leader dedicated to victory and raising players to their potential** – unity of vision doesn't happen spontaneously. The right players with the proper diversity of talent don't come together on their own. It takes a leader to make those things happen. It takes a leader to provide the motivation, empowerment, and direction required to win.

Leaders who practice the Law of Victory believe that anything less than success is unacceptable. And they have Plan B. That is why they keep fighting. And it's why they continue to win.

How dedicated are you to winning the "fight"? Are you going to have the Law of Victory in your corner as you lead? Or when times get difficult, are you going to throw in the towel? Your answer to that question may determine whether you succeed or fail as a leader and whether your team wins or loses.

# 16. The Law of the Big Mo

## Momentum Is a Leader's Best Friend

If you've got all the passion, tools and people you need to fulfil a great vision, yet you can't seem to get your organization moving and going in the right direction, you're dead in the water as a leader. If you can't get things going, you will not succeed. You need to harness the power of the leader's best friend – momentum.

When you have no momentum, even the simplest tasks seem impossible.

On the other hand, when you have momentum on your side, the future looks bright, and obstacles appear small. An organization with momentum is like a train that's moving at sixty miles per hour.

### Truths about momentum

**1) Momentum is the great exaggerator** – momentum is like a magnifying glass; it makes things look bigger than they really are. Because momentum has such a great impact, leaders try to control it. When you have momentum, you don't worry about small problems and many larger ones seem to work themselves out.

**2) Momentum makes leaders look better than they are** – When leaders have momentum on their side, people forget about their past mistakes. Once a leader creates some success for his organization, people give him more credit than he deserves. Momentum exaggerates a leader's success and makes him look better than he really is.

**3) Momentum helps followers perform better than they are** – When momentum is strong, people are motivated to perform at higher levels, making all participants more successful than they would be otherwise.

**4) Momentum is easier to steer than to start** – Getting started is a struggle, but once you're moving forward, you can really start to do some amazing things.

**5) Momentum is the most powerful change agent** – Given enough momentum, nearly any kind of change is possible in an organization. Followers trust leaders with a proven track record. They accept changes from people when they have led them to victory before. Momentum puts victory within reach.

**6) Momentum is the leader's responsibility** – It takes a leader to create momentum. Followers can catch it. But creating momentum requires someone who has vision, can assemble a good team, and motivates others. If the leader is waiting for the organization to develop momentum on its own, then the organization is in trouble.

**7) Momentum begins inside the leader** – It starts with vision, passion, and enthusiasm. The leader must model those qualities to his people day in and day



out, which will attract like-minded people to his team. Once you see forward progress, you will begin to generate momentum. Once you have it, you can do almost anything. That's the power of the Big Mo.

# 17. The Law of Priorities

## Leaders Understand That Activity Is Not Necessarily Accomplishment

Leaders never advance to a point where they no longer need to prioritize. *Busyness* does not equal productivity. Activity is not necessarily accomplishment. Prioritizing requires leaders to continually think ahead, to know what's important, to see how everything relates to the overall vision.

The Pareto Principle – if you focus your attention on the activities that rank in the top 20 percent in terms of importance, you have an 80 percent return on your effort. For example if you have 100 customers, the top 20 will provide you 80% of your business, so focus on them.

**The Three R's** – requirement, return and reward. Leaders must order their lives according to these three questions:

**1) What is required?** Any list of priorities must begin with what is required of us. The question to ask yourself is, "What must I do that nobody can or should do for me?" If I'm doing something that is not necessary, I should eliminate it. If I'm doing something that's necessary but not required of me personally, I need to delegate it.

**2) What gives the greatest return?** As a leader, you should spend most of your time working in your areas of greatest strength. Ideally, leaders should get out of their comfort zone but stay in their strength zone. My rule of thumb: If something can be done 80 percent as well by someone else, I delegate it.

**3) What brings the greatest reward?** Life is too short not to do the things you love. Your personal interests energize you and keep you passionate. And passion provides the fuel in your life to keep you going.

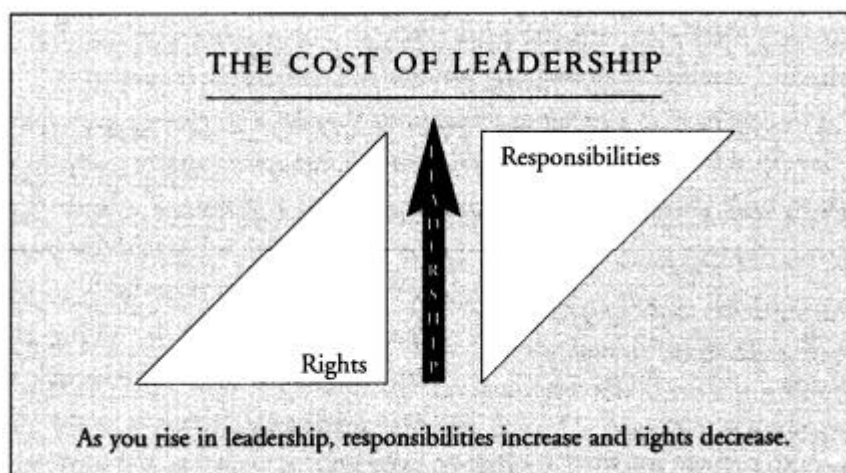
## 18. The Law of Sacrifice

### A Leader Must Give Up to Go Up

If you desire to become the best leader you can be, then you need to be willing to make sacrifices in order to lead well. If that is your desire, then here are some things you need to know about the Law of Sacrifice.

**1) There is no success without sacrifice** – Every person who has achieved any success in life has made sacrifices to do so. Effective leaders sacrifice much that is good in order to dedicate themselves to what is best.

**2) Leaders are often asked to give up more than others** – The heart of leadership is putting others ahead of yourself. It's doing what is best for the team. For that reason, leaders have to give up their rights.



The cost of leadership: Leaders must be willing to give up more than the people they lead. Leadership means sacrifice.

**3) You must keep giving up to stay up** – Leadership success requires continual change, constant improvement, and ongoing sacrifice.

**4) The higher the level of leadership, the greater the sacrifice** – The higher you go, the more it's going to cost you. And it doesn't matter what kind of leadership career you pick. You will have to make sacrifices. You will have to give up to go up.

# 19. The Law of Timing

## When to Lead Is As Important As What to Do and Where to Go

Timing is often the difference between success and failure in an endeavour. Every time a leader makes a move, there are really only four outcomes:

**1) The wrong action at the wrong time leads to disaster** – If you take the wrong action at the wrong time, your people suffer and so will your leadership.

**2) The right action at the wrong time brings resistance** – Having a vision for the right direction and knowing how to get there is not enough. If you take the right action but do it at the wrong time, you may still be unsuccessful because the people you lead can become resistant. Good leadership timing requires many things:

- a. **Understanding:** Leaders must have a firm grasp on the situation.
- b. **Maturity:** If a leader's motives aren't right, his timing will be off.
- c. **Confidence:** People follow leaders who know what must be done.
- d. **Decisiveness:** Wishy-washy leaders create wishy-washy followers.
- e. **Experience:** If leaders don't possess experience, then they need to gain wisdom from others who do possess it.
- f. **Intuition:** Timing often depends on intangibles, such as momentum and morale.
- g. **Preparation:** If the conditions aren't right, leaders must create those conditions.

**3) The wrong action at the right time is a mistake** – the greatest mistake made by entrepreneurs is not knowing when to cut their losses or when to increase their investment to maximize gains. Their mistakes come from taking the wrong action at the right time.

**4) The right action at the right time results in success** – When the right action and the right timing come together an organization achieves its goals and reaps incredible rewards.

Reading the right situation and knowing what to do are not enough to make you succeed in leadership. If you want your company to move forward, you must pay attention to timing. Only the right action at the right time will bring success. No leader can escape the Law of Timing.

## **20. The Law of Explosive Growth**

**To Add Growth, Lead Followers – To Multiply, Lead Leaders**

You can grow by leading followers. But if you want to maximize your leadership and help your organization reach its potential, you need to develop leaders. There is no other way to experience explosive growth.

Leaders who attract followers but never develop leaders get tired. Being able to impact only those people you can touch personally is very limiting.

In contrast, leaders who develop leaders impact people far beyond their personal reach. Every time you develop leaders and help them increase their leadership ability, you make them capable of influencing an even greater number of people.

# 21. The Law of Legacy

## A Leader's Lasting Value Is Measured by Succession

What do you want people to say at your funeral? If you want your leadership to have real meaning, you need to take into account the Law of Legacy. A leader's lasting value is measured by succession.

If you desire to make an impact as a leader on a future generation, then become highly intentional about your legacy. We have a choice about what legacy we will leave, and we must work and be intentional to leave the legacy we want. Here's how:

**1) Know the legacy you want to leave** – most people simply accept their lives – they don't lead them. I believe that people need to be proactive about how they live, and I believe that is especially true for leaders. Someday people will summarize your life in a single sentence. My advice: pick it now!

**2) Live the legacy you want to leave** – I believe that to have any credibility as a leader, you must live what you say you believe. If you want to create a legacy, you need to live it first.

**3) Choose who will carry on your legacy** – A legacy lives on in people, not things. Too often leaders put their energy into organizations, buildings or other lifeless objects. But only people live on after we are gone. Everything else is temporary.

**4) Make sure you pass the baton** – No matter how well you lead, if you don't make sure you pass the baton, you will not leave the legacy you desire.

Our ability as leaders will not be measured by the buildings we build, or institutions we established. We will be judged by how well the people we invested in carried on after we are gone.

Jackie Robinson observed, "A life isn't significant except for its impact on other lives." In the end we will be judged according to the Law of Legacy. A leader's lasting value is measured by succession.