

"The Making of a Leader"

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Notes by Dave Kraft

Not many leaders experience convergence. Often they are promoted to roles that hinder their gift-mix. (33) Leadership is a lifetime of lessons. (40) Methods are many, Principles are few. Methods always change, Principles never do. (43) Learning what not to do is as important as learning what to do. (46) Because the very nature of leadership is influence, God endows leaders with the capacity to influence. (52) As a leader, you should recognize that God is continually developing you over a lifetime. God will increase your capacity to influence through developing your spiritual gifts. (54) The God-given capacity to lead has two parts: giftedness and character. Integrity is the heart of character. (58) *Integrity is foundational for effective leadership; it must be instilled early in a leader's character.* (63) It pointed out that God's first priority in developing a leader is to refine his or her character. Integrity is the true measure of the inner life. Character development comes before ministry. (78) Learning submission is critical to learning what authority is, so emerging leaders must first learn to submit. Healthy relationships are essential to effective ministry. (81) Small ministry tasks can be early indicators of leadership potential. (83)

It is self-initiation in the entry patterns that indicates strong potential for upper-level leadership. A major responsibility of leadership is the selection and development of potential leaders. (87) Conflict management skills are especially needed in middle and later ministry development. (89) Full-time leaders of churches or Christian organizations usually manifest more than one spiritual gift. *Gift-mix* describes the set of spiritual gifts a leader repeatedly demonstrates in ministry. *Gift-cluster* refers to a gift-mix in which there is a dominant gift supported by other gifts. (92) A leader is one who influences a specific group of people to move in a God-given direction. Leaders who have trouble submitting to authority will usually have trouble exercising spiritual authority. (101)

The most important relational insight I have learned is that subordinates must be very careful in their correction of those in authority over them. One needs to be more than just right on issues to correct such a leader. Rightness or wrongness is not the whole matter. Sometimes being right on certain issues is less important than maintaining a positive relationship. I learned this lesson the hard way, but it has stayed with me. There were two results of this lesson: I learned that I was not very flexible and needed to allow God to begin changing my rigidity, and I learned to give up the right to be right. (106) Ministry conflict, like general conflict, tests a leader's personal maturity.

What we truly are is revealed in a crisis. Conflict processing is important not so much for learning problem solving, but for its value in revealing character. (107)

Four process items form the cluster called power items. Power items are characterized by gifted power, prayer power, power encounters, and networking power. The ultimate purpose of the power cluster is to train a leader to (112) habitually appropriate God's power through faith. (113) Faith challenges are directly linked to effective ministry. Leaders are people with God-given vision, and one of their essential functions is to inspire followers with that vision and hope. They can't fulfill this function without faith. (117) A leader is to respond to God's challenge to accept varying spheres of influence in order to find God's proper sphere for him. (118) Not everyone is suited to be a mentor. Mentors are people who can readily see potential in a person. (131) Many high-level leaders are known for reading widely and for their capacity to apply lessons to their own lives from what they read. (141) An essential characteristic of leadership is the ability to receive truth from God. They are quick to discern God's truth in everyday life. They learn to hear the voice of God through the ministry of other people. (142)

A major symptom of a plateaued leader is one to whom word items are infrequent. (143) Normally, major decisions will see the convergence of God's voice in the heart (the emotional desires), God's voice in circumstances (providential factors), God's voice in the church (confirmation from mature fellow Christians in the local body in which we participate), and God's voice in the Word. (147) Therefore, emerging leaders should cultivate reading skills and expect God to meet them in unusual ways through reading. (149) Ministry can be successful through giftedness alone; but a leader whose ministry skills outstrip his character formation will eventually falter. Character formation is fundamental. Ministry flows out of being. Spiritual authority results from a leader's experience with God. (167)

The new pastor was not like the old one. He was very careful and deliberate. He was more cautious, but also indecisive. He was not likely to recognize innovative emergent leaders and free them for ministry. (176) From early experiences with discipling and in small groups in my church in Reynoldsburg, Ohio, I saw that for me *ministry has to be personal*. I saw the power of small groups and the dynamic of one-on-one ministry. These ministry structures were life-changing. Yet not all people were willing to accept my personal ministry. I learned to be selective in those whom I disciplined in-depth. From these insights I developed a further value: *I will give as much as I can to one who chooses to have it*. (178) Frank Sells imparted to me one of his ministry philosophy ideas: *Be as clear as the Bible is clear; nothing less, nothing more, nothing else*. (179) *Effective leaders, at all levels of leadership, maintain a learning posture throughout life. Effective leaders who are productive over a lifetime have a dynamic ministry philosophy that evolves continually from the interplay of three major factors: biblical dynamics, personal aifts. and situational dynamics*. (180)

A major responsibility of leadership is recognition of rising leaders, their selection, and development. (189) Leaders must develop a ministry philosophy that simultaneously honors biblical leadership values, embraces the challenges of the times in which they live, and fits their unique gifts and personal development if they expect to be productive over a whole lifetime. (194)

Challenge 1: When Christ calls leaders to Christian ministry He intends to develop them to their full potential. Each of us in leadership is responsible to continue developing in accordance with God's processing all our life. Challenge 2: A major function of all leadership is that of selection of rising leadership. Leaders must continually be aware of God's processing of younger leaders and work with that process. Challenge 3: Leaders must develop a ministry philosophy that simultaneously honors biblical leadership values, (196) embraces the challenges of the times in which they live, and fits their unique gifts and personal development if they expect to be productive over a whole lifetime.

A leader, as defined from a study of biblical leadership, and for whom we are interested in tracing leadership development is a person (1) with God-given capacity and (2) with God given responsibility to influence (3) a specific group of God's people (4) toward God's purposes for the group. (197) Therefore, each of us as leaders is expected to assess our spiritual gifts and our abilities and to use them to capacity. (198) Remember Goodwin's expectation principle: A potential leader tends to rise to the level of genuine expectancy of a leader he or she respects. (200) If the Lord were to make a statement to us, looking not only at the leadership gap but also at the present leaders, He might rephrase Matthew 9:36-38 as I have done: (202) When He saw the leaders, He was filled with dismay, because so many quit, so many were set aside, and so many were plateaued and directionless. They had lost their zest for leading. They had no clear philosophy or direction in their leadership. They were leaderless leaders. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the leaders with clear direction are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth knowledgeable, discerning, and direction-oriented leader-laborers into His harvest." (203)