

Leadership Guide

(For Dummies)

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Purpose

So, you're a leader and don't know where to begin. Well, I'm right there with you, which is why I made this guide to help navigate us through leadership. Leadership is the position of a leader, which is someone who leads. Thank you dictionary for sorting that one out. To lead is to guide, or direct, others, so a leader is someone who guides and directs others, and leadership is the position of someone who guides and directs others.

As a leader, people are looking at you for guidance and direction. (Don't let it get to your head).

If you're wondering about how to become a leader, stop. Though it is admirable to want to guide others, leadership is best given, not taken. By that I mean that it is better to have others recognize that you are already a leader, as others have come to you for direction and guidance, and then given a leadership role, than to strive for the role itself. Though please note that leadership will often come when you do not expect it, and perhaps you already are there.

There are many different forms of leadership, such as at work, or with groups of people, or at home. And each person has their own style of leadership that fits their personality. Due to the different vast number of different forms and styles leadership can take, it would be best to instead look at leadership principles.

Servanthood



The basic principle for leadership is servanthood. Many people claim to be a servant leader, but few may actually live up to it. So, what is a servant leader, and how does one go about correctly navigating servant leadership, and what are some of the pitfalls to avoid.

Because a leader is someone who guides people, the principle of servanthood means that guiding them isn't to further our own cause, but in service to their needs. Followers are not there to support a leader; a leader is there to support their followers. The temptation will be to think that we are guiding them in a manner that we believe to be helping them, when in actuality, it is not. We will use excesses about things like, its for the better of the mission. The point is that we can inadvertently steamroll over others in leadership when we do not sincerely take them into consideration. So here are a few helpful tips in seeking to serve rightly in leadership

Do not avoid criticism, rather look for it: To avoid criticism creates an atmosphere of dishonesty with those around you, and will further blind ourselves to our own flaws.

No job is too small: As a leader, don't scoff at what some may consider the "small jobs"

Set aside your own personal ambitions for the sake of the larger body: Striving after your own ambition above the sake of the larger body results in consolidating power, and the manipulation of others.

See leadership as a gift from God, not earned: Seeing it as a divine appointed gift should be humbling, as we have not received it based on any merit of ourselves, rather we look to Christ.

Set up people to replace you: When there are no other leaders to pass the torch on too, the established leader inevitably strong arms his position.

Seek out others to be leaders: It's not all about us, rather give others an opportunity. Just be sure not to "stack the deck" with people who are too much like us, lest we become blind.

Power and Responsibility



A great man once said “with great power comes great responsibility” (Ben Parker, *Spiderman*). When we are in positions of leadership, we must never forget that we have power, and with it a responsibility to use it well. The world tells us to leverage our power to influence the thoughts and actions of other people to better suit our own needs. But the Bible tells us to use our power to help the oppressed, to serve on another, and to glorify God.

Power is not bad; it is a tool that can bring about great harm or great good. The principle of power and responsibility when it comes to leadership is that we need to be aware that when we have power, we will desire to use it to fulfill our own ambitions, but this power is for serving others. The other desire that we will have is to neglect any power or responsibility that comes with it, and therefore not help those who we are called, and equipped to help (again to fulfill our own ambitions). Here are helpful tips when considering power and responsibility:

Serve in ways others would want: The way we normally “serve” we are still in control we choose who, when, where and how we serve.

Walk the path of the cross: We are afraid of becoming manipulated, or taken advantage of, to be in a position of weakness: We are not called to serve when it best suits us, we are called to be servants, wholly and completely. When we serve, we will be manipulated and taken advantage of, but this is the path that Christ walked.

Prayer



A leader should be in constant prayer with God. we have a responsibility to lead others toward God, and if we are not constantly speaking and listening to God in His leading, we can lead others away from God. These prayers are not petitions we have to God, but rather an offering and a conversation with the God we know, and who knows us. Prayer also helps posture our heart in humility, knowing that God has bestowed upon us all that we have. When things start to get hard, because leadership will get hard, prayer is the most reliable thing we have to lean on. Conversely, a leader who is not listening to God, will gradually find themselves listening to their own ambitions, and falsehoods. So here are some helpful tips for the principle of prayer in leadership:

Know the voice of God: Knowing the true voice of God from false ones can be tricky, but through the study of His word, and the testing of His will (Rom 12:1-3), we will be able to know His voice better.

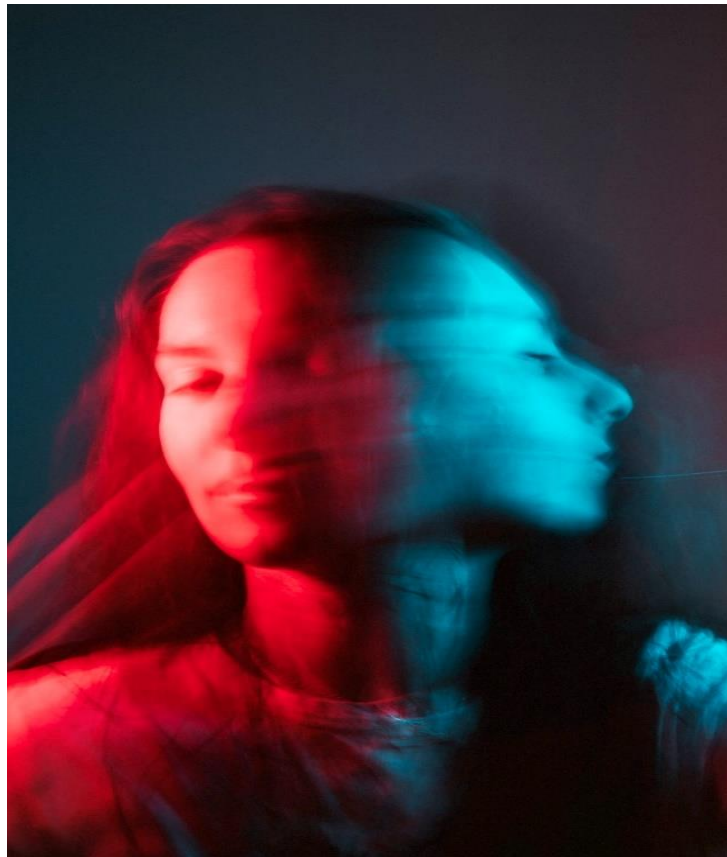
Pray without ceasing: Eat sleep and breath conversing with God, even in your dreams.

Pray at every meeting: Show the importance of prayer, by always remembering it at meetings.

Be wary of Pride: Do not use prayer as a show case of your own spirituality.

Slow down for Prayer: God may not answer you right away, and he may not answer you in the way you were hoping for, God is not required to bend to our will. Rather we should seek his will in these moments to know him more.

Emotions



Emotions, we all have them, and they can be difficult to manage at times. For leaders, who will be constantly bombarded by stressors and spiritual warfare, emotions may even play a larger role in their lives. Yet many leaders choose to ignore their emotions, seeing them as only a weakness or a flaw that should be hidden. Yet suppressing our emotions causes us to be blind to how we lead out of our own insecurities, and we end up being more wrathful, or depressed, or ashamed, or whatever it is. On the other hand, a leader who is more emotionally aware is easy to approach, sets good boundaries, operates in their strengths better, doesn't get as defensive in conflicts, along with a plethora of other benefits. How then, can we become more emotionally healthy leaders?

Be more vulnerable and honest with yourself: Taking a good hard look at your own life, and routinely doing some self-reflection helps in identifying emotions, which is the first step.

Counselling: Seeking professional help can be extremely helpful, and it's their job to help people be more mentally and emotionally healthy.

Be more vulnerable with someone you trust: After identifying what emotions are typically at work in you, you can begin to discuss with someone you trust. This will help breakdown some insecurities as well as bring about a deeper understanding of your own emotions.