

THE HIGHER VIEW



THE PRINCIPLED LEADER

Learning To Lead Effectively
From The Inside-Out

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WHAT IS A LEADER?



INTRODUCTION

What is a Leader?

BY MELISSA MCCRERY

Before we get into the nitty-gritty of principled leadership, let's make sure we're all on the same page regarding what a leader is. There are a thousand definitions of leadership, and we want to ensure that we're all speaking the same language.

Generally, a leader motivates others to act toward achieving a common goal. A leader can rally people around a cause and move them to take action toward achieving a particular objective.

A good leader *inspires* people to do something bigger than themselves. To work together to accomplish key objectives. To pool their strengths and resources to achieve great things. A good leader helps their team members become the absolute best version of themselves.

By inspiring the people of England to keep fighting in WWII, Winston Churchill is a great example of leadership. Thanks to his inspirational leadership, the people of England made great sacrifices in their fight against the evil Nazi regime.

A leader differs from a manager. A manager directs people, gathers resources, and deploys them most effectively. Yes, a manager can bring people together, but they don't inspire them to take big, bold action.

Managers are about efficiency, while leaders are about vision.

What traits and talents characterize a good leader?

Here are 7 high-level characteristics:

- **Vision.** An effective leader has a clear vision of where they want to go and how they will get there. They understand where they are and are crystal clear on what it will take for them to get to where they want to be. The leader must be able to communicate this vision clearly to his team.
- **Motivation.** An effective leader is highly skilled at motivating people. They know what makes others tick and can tap into those emotional triggers. Their words and actions can motivate people to do things they maybe wouldn't do otherwise.
- **Service.** The best leaders are those who serve their followers. They seek to serve their team and make their team effective. They support their team members in whatever ways they can rather than constantly focusing on their agenda and what they want to accomplish.
- **Empathy.** A leader must be able to place themselves in the shoes of others. If they want to create consensus among their team, they must understand the concerns of others and effectively respond to those concerns.
- **Creativity.** The highly effective leader is creative when it comes to achieving their outcomes. They use their imagination to look beyond what is directly in front of them to see what's possible. They're able to see how they can effectively leverage the skills of their followers for the maximum good.
- **Demanding.** The best leaders demand the best from their teams. They don't settle for mediocre results or half-hearted efforts. Rather, they set an example of passionate work for their team, and they expect their team to follow their example.

- **Management.** A leader must be able to manage themselves as well as those who follow them. They must be able to strategically guide their team through complex processes, effectively resolve challenges they encounter, and marshal the resources of their team to be deployed for the most good.

No characteristics, on their own, make for a good leader. The best leaders possess a combination of all these characteristics.

They can be both creative and demanding at the same time. They can manage effectively while also expressing empathy for their team members. They can provide vision while serving their followers simultaneously.

It's important to understand that leadership isn't about having a particular position, title, or personal attributes. Just because you're an executive doesn't mean you're a leader. Having the corner office doesn't mean you're good at leadership. Having a charismatic personality doesn't make you a leader.

Kevin Kruse puts it this way:

Leadership is a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others towards the achievement of a goal.

Fortunately, leadership is NOT something you're born with. Rather, it's something you learn over time through practice. And you can become a better leader than you currently are.

If you're not an effective leader now, you can grow and become an effective leader. You can learn the skills and techniques necessary to have the social influence Kevin Kruse talks about.

That's what this eBook is all about. In this book, you'll discover 11 principles of highly effective leadership.

By implementing these principles in your own life, you can become a powerful, passionate, inspirational leader. You can

help others become the best version of themselves and achieve great things. You can lead them to accomplish your vision.

Ready to dive in?

Let’s get started.



LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK

1

Leadership Framework

BY MELISSA MCCRERY

Any great leader knows that if they fail to plan, they should plan to fail.

And yet, so many leaders do not know where to begin in their planning. I suggest, begin with the end in mind and then working your plan backward.

First, define what success looks like in your leadership. And then identify 2-3 core values that will be the foundation of everything you do. Next, set 3-4 pillars, similar to core values, that will help you to set the framework for your plan.

Laying the foundation of core values and setting the pillars of leadership will begin your blueprint for leadership success.

You may be wondering what the difference is between laying your foundation and setting your pillars, and why not just have 5-7 core values and call it a day. Let me explain.

Your 2-3 core values will be what you will stand on 100% of the time. These are things like Integrity, Authenticity, Honor, Faith, Love, Growth, etc. Your core values will be consistent no matter what you are doing, what you are teaching, or what you and your team are going through.

However, your pillars will not always be evident. These are things like Protection, Resilience, Optimism, Grit, etc. You may be a protective leader, but it is usually only evident where the team or mission needs protecting. The same with resilience. It may not always be evident when challenges are not coming at you.

However, these pillars are set and you are always building around them.

Now, after you have laid your foundation and set your pillars, you need to consider your ceiling. What are the qualities you want to attain for yourself, your team, your organization? What is the high and lofty goal? How will you define success? Is it financial success? Is it influential in success and recognition? Is it growth and character?

This is the framework that every exemplary leader must figure out. I highly suggest utilizing graphics and naming the parts of the leadership structure you are building, so you have something visual to relate to.

And then, finally, realize the amazing structure you are building becomes the foundation for the next generation of leaders to build their structure upon. So, build well.



THE VISIONARY LEADER



2

The Visionary Leader

BY MELISSA MCCRERY

A leader moves people to take action. A leader helps others get from point A to point B. A leader looks forward to the future, sees good outcomes, and then helps people move toward those good outcomes.

A leader has a vision. A leader doesn't merely organize people, resources, and efforts, although that's certainly necessary. A leader can peer into the future, see how certain actions will produce specific outcomes, and then motivate others to take those actions.

A powerful vision has four specific elements:

- It captures the heart and imagination. First, a leader's vision can capture the hearts and imaginations of their followers. Those who hear a positive vision for the future very much want to be a part of it.
- It must be vivid. A leader must be able to paint a vivid picture of where they want to go. They should communicate the benefits of their vision in clear, concrete, and powerful ways.
- It must be achievable. While the vision must stretch others, it also must be achievable. If it's not achievable, then they won't want to be a part of it.
- It must be future-oriented. The leader looks into the future and sees what's possible. They can see a better future than the present, and they can move others toward that future.

It's important to note that you won't get people on board with your vision if you don't possess the qualities already mentioned. If you're not confident in your vision, others won't believe it's possible. If you're not passionate about your vision, they won't be excited to be part of it.

If you're not emotionally intelligent, you won't be able to effectively tap into people's emotions.

Whenever possible, communicate your vision to those around you. Theodore Hesburgh, the President of the University of Notre Dame, said:

"The very essence of leadership is that you have to have a vision. It's got to be a vision you articulate clearly and forcefully on every occasion."

To get people on board with your vision, it's important to communicate clearly and forcefully as much as possible. Paint a picture of the good life that others will experience if your vision becomes reality.

James Kouzes and Barry Posner put it this way:

"There's nothing more demoralizing than a leader who can't clearly articulate why we're doing what we're doing."

You don't want those following you to be demoralized. How do you prevent this? By clearly articulating the why behind the actions you're asking people to take.



THE DICHOTOMY OF LEADERSHIP

3

The Dichotomy of Leadership

BY MELISSA MCCRERY

As leaders, we are often faced with dichotomies, though often, at the moment, we may not be aware.

There must be an intentional paradigm shift from being the make-believe, fantastical leader who can handle everything and carry an entire load of responsibility on their own to being the leader who knows when to follow.

You must find the equilibrium between the seemingly opposing forces of leading and following.

But what if these are not opposing forces? What if true leadership is found in the ability to check your ego at the door, completely own the over responsibility yet recognize the strengths of others and then employ those strengths in the areas of your weaknesses?

I love this quote; *“It doesn’t make sense to hire smart people and then tell them what to do; we hire smart people so they can tell us what to do.”* – Steve Jobs

It is a brilliant strategy to recognize you are not capable of doing everything yourself. Instead, recognize your weaknesses alongside your people's assets and then employ them to lead in that area. Their strengths employed will make the entire organization look great, and you will accomplish what you could not alone.

In my teachings around understanding leadership archetypes, there are varying states we as leaders must learn to manage to ultimately be successful. Much like what seems to be opposing

forces of lion and lamb, we too must know when to be a leader or a follower, a statesman or a warrior, etc.

In support of this idea, I like to quote Aristotle, who stated, " He who cannot be a good follower, cannot be a good leader."

No leader indeed has all the answers 100% of the time. We all see and hear in part. But a truly great leader will set their ego aside and have a unique way of bringing the parts together to strategize an intricate puzzle.

Another aspect of a great leader is the ability to build up great followers, lead them, and build them up so that they are no longer needed. The dichotomy of being so good at what you do that you can then be replaced.

I know that doesn't sound like it makes sense.

Most leaders operate from a self-protective and fearful leadership style to maintain their position and need for them. This will naturally cap their followers. However, great leaders will raise their followers to duplicate and replace them. Not because they no longer want to be a leader, but because they understand that other opportunities will undoubtedly open to them as they outgrow their current position and can be replaced.

There is so much to understanding leadership dichotomies. I would encourage you to dive into this topic and explore the benefits of recognizing seemingly opposing forces and navigating them as you develop into an exemplary leader.



THE HONORABLE LEADER



4

The Honorable Leader

BY KATHLEEN LINDSAY

One principle of great leadership that separates average leaders from the most powerful and influential is that of the honorable leader. They stand apart because they lead from the very core of their identity and live a life honoring others in integrity. This principle of honor, as well as being honorable, is rooted in great character and a strong moral compass. Leaders who create a culture of honor demonstrate a solid understanding of their own identity in authenticity and embrace the reality of our human existence. They are motivated to show honor and respect towards all people. The honorable leader is not moved by their status in life and always prefers others regardless of their position in an organization, ministry, and community.

The honorable leader does not focus on the status (or level of influence) of the people they lead or interact with on their team, organization, or community; they consistently view each human encounter as an opportunity to exhibit humility and honor, and especially those they lead.

C. S. Lewis stated that "True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less." I recall various times as a lead pastor developing young, aspiring influencers, where my investment of time, willing heart, and resources appeared to be dishonored and devalued. While I cannot say there weren't times my heart felt crushed by the weight of it all, in those times, it took an intentional effort to remember that their story deserved grace, honor, and basic human compassion. I believe that my response to the lack of honor towards me as a leader and being honorable made the difference. I am indeed leading from my

core values and motivated by a higher purpose and for the greater good. So the weight of the pain and sacrifice to lead those who did not understand this principle of honor and being honorable became (yes, over time, not overnight) a key motivator in my life, ministry, and leadership style to create a culture of honor.

Short of it all, remain humble, honorable, and extend much grace regardless of the action of others. In my experience, this capacity to look beyond behaviors and respond to the individual's humanity makes us the effective, honorable, and transformational leaders for our organizations and teams.

For the honorable leader, preferring others through humility and honoring them becomes a way of life. As you surround yourself with the "best of the best" and you are diligently building your teams with the greatest talent in their chosen field of expertise, lean into the principle of honor. You will find by leaning in and preferring others honorably, you create a recipe for success in reaching your goals and objectives.

The honorable leader also recognizes how great character, integrity, preferring others, and being true to their own identity effectively create congruency throughout their leadership style. As defined by Webster, honorable means "deserving respect or high regard." So by leading from this key principle (or core value) of honoring others creates a capacity to influence others, not from your positional authority as a leader, but from relational equity, built on trust and honor.



THE COMMUNICATING LEADER

5

The Communicating Leader

BY KATHLEEN LINDSAY

The greatest leaders who achieve the most and inspire the most people typically communicate powerfully and effectively on a large platform. They are motivated by their vision and mission and embrace the overarching message they are communicating to express the team or organization's purpose. Yet, some of the most important communication occurs within smaller teams and organizations and in day-to-day operations. So it is essential to develop strong communication skills, whether in the weekly team status meetings or speaking on large platforms.

Communicating the vision with passion, zeal, clarity, and force does not always come naturally to some leaders. Effective communication is sometimes developed by embracing active listening skills, maintaining confidentiality, and never shying away from a healthy rumble occasionally from diverse perspectives. I discovered that, especially within the daily operations leading a team, clarity of disseminating the mission, goals, and objectives become essential to building effective and influencing positive outcomes. The greatest leaders work exceptionally hard to ensure that their communications are clear, concise, effective, and highly motivating.

How can you ensure that your communications are both clear and powerful? Consider the intended outcome of your communications when planning to disseminate information. Is it to clarify an existing concept or principle already shared with your team or organization? Or is it to share new information for strategic direction or shift in day-to-day operations or leadership changes that provoke a call to action? As a leader, whatever your

purposes for communicating, whether in digital space, in-person, or electronic communications, you should prepare by utilizing the 7 "C's" of communication:

- Clear. Every aspect of your communications must be clear, both to you and to your audience.
- Complete. Your communications should include as much relevant information as possible, so the listener can get a complete picture.
- Concise. Your sentences, paragraphs, and main points should all be appropriately concise.
- Concrete. Use concrete language rather than abstract.
- Courteous. Your communications should be courteous to your audience, considering both their feelings and viewpoints.
- Correct. Each statement in your communications should be correct and integral.
- Considerate. Your communications consider how the audience thinks and presents information in relevant and helpful ways for its purposes.

The greatest leaders take the necessary time to craft their communications so they are as powerful and impactful as possible. They don't rush things because they realize that few things are more powerful than their words.

As a leader in both the corporate setting and ministry, I can reflect on times when my message was very clear in my head, but it was not always effective. The way we craft communications must express the purpose and intended outcomes and creatively cast a vision on the "how we will get there" message.

The Center For Creative Leadership puts it this way:

“Communication is a core leadership function. Effective communication and effective leadership are closely intertwined. Leaders need to be skilled communicators in countless relationships at the organizational level, in communities and groups, and sometimes on a global scale.

"You need to think with clarity, express ideas, and share information with a multitude of audiences.”

So, to be a great leader, focus on strengthening your communication skills. Without communicating clearly, you simply cannot move people from point A to point B. You won't paint a vivid picture of your vision or inspire others to take great action.



THE INTEGRIOUS LEADER



6

The Integrous Leader

BY KATHLEEN LINDSAY

Integrity means always following your core values. It means saying what you'll do and doing what you say. It means you have strong moral values leading from a place of authenticity and integrity. The leader of integrity holds fast to those moral values in every situation because they are genuinely at the very core of their identity.

Some leaders adapt their core values and compromise their integrity to accommodate what they think will produce the best outcome. The truth of the matter, if you don't have integrity and lead in authenticity (holistically in body, soul, and spirit), your followers will quickly abandon you. They quickly discover that your ends always justify the means, whether integral or not. What you say differs from what you do. Integrity is the key that makes the difference in the principled-based leader's effectiveness to lead congruently from their moral compass vs. compromising values to meet the demands of a situation, scenario, or circumstance.

Early in my career as a Business Procedures Analyst at a Fortune 500 company, I discovered many opportunities to either lean into my core value of integrity or be influenced by the corporate world and "overlook" inconsistencies in activities my team's weekly reports. I was a leader of a small team of microcode order analysts, where I had once been their peer teammate but was promoted to supervisor. This was very challenging to navigate as a young emerging leader. How do I navigate the extended lunch breaks of team members? Or handle the analyst who used company time and resources to go online for personal gain. The

short answer, with integrity and honor, which are partners for life. Yes, it is making tough decisions not led by our emotions, but from the core of our identity rooted in integrity and honor.

So, remaining integral, or whole and embracing my true identity means I cannot put on different "hats" to suit the perceived needs of the people I lead. It means we must never be willing to compromise. The thing about integrity is that it's ingrained deeply in one's identity. Integrity cannot be surface level by committing to "never telling little white lies". No, the decisions and actions of a leader leaning into integrity are non-negotiables throughout their lives... whether in the conference room, at home, or in community settings.

Steven Covey said, *“Moral authority comes from following universal and timeless principles like honesty, integrity, treating people with respect.”*

Do you want to influence those you lead from a place of moral authority or positional authority? Do you want them to respect and honor you as a person of integrity? Do you want them to do what you ask without grumbling and arguing? Be a person of integrity.

Sometimes, you're faced with ethical dilemmas. In those moments, you have two options:

- Act with integrity and gain the respect of those under you.
- Act without integrity and lose the trust of your followers.

While there is the potential to lose friendships and cordial business relationships, without integrity, those under your leadership, or even peer relationships, can trust you. They will question your motives and not be able to honor or respect you as a leader with a strong moral compass. Typically, this means decisions and tasks assigned are selfish or for personal gain rather than the good of the team members and the organization.



THE ACCOUNTABLE LEADER



7

The Accountable Leader

BY CYNTHIA MERGEN

Have you ever thought about what it means to hold yourself accountable when leading others?

Authentic leaders will always maintain responsibility for their actions. They stand knowing that whatever those actions produce, they will not only lead by example but take ownership of its outcome, about how they lead themselves and their team.

Accountable leaders know that when things go well, to celebrate the win by honoring and giving credit to their team. You also acknowledge that when things do not go well, you hold yourself to a higher standard of accountability by owning that the buck stops with you. When things go awry, you take the blame. Why? Because you are not just their leader, you are responsible for them, and everything ultimately falls on you.

The opposite of the accountable leader is the *victim* leader. A *victim* leader refuses to take responsibility for the failure of their team. They blame others to save face yet will not hesitate to receive accolades for the team's successes. This behavior reveals a *self-serving disposition* where they refuse to acknowledge that their actions could cause any problems and cause them to take a defensive position and constantly blame others for the challenges they face.

If you desire to be a powerful and captivating leader, then you must accept 100% responsibility for the consequences of your actions. Decisiveness is necessary when working towards influencing specific outcomes and the willingness to accept the aftermath, whatever that turns out to be.

One way to influence your team can be to set an example by encouraging open collaboration, which will foster greater accountability and trust among your peers.

Deep Patel puts it this way:

Effective leaders hold themselves accountable and take responsibility for their own mistakes—and they expect others to do the same. They can work within established procedures and be productive and efficient in their decisions.

Leaders who fail to hold themselves accountable will cause frustration and limitations in those they are leading. They can foster a restrictive and somewhat hostile atmosphere that can lead to everyone operating out of a victim mindset.

Leading with accountability will always bring authenticity into those following you that will cause them to collaborate openly and be willing to take responsibility for what they bring to the table. You will effectively instill an atmosphere of admiration as your team excels with you as you lead by your example of excellence in holding yourself accountable in everything you do.

When you work hard to hold yourself accountable, your team will follow.



THE SERVANT LEADER

8

The Servant Leader

BY CYNTHIA MERGEN

Many people think that leaders must be proud, brash, and always right. The opposite is true. The best leaders are humble, listen, and will admit when they're wrong.

Humility is one key to great leadership.

A proud leader is in danger of blind spots. They are convinced that they are always right. They're sure that their way is the best. They feel like they don't need to listen to the opinions of others.

This is a recipe for disaster.

A humble leader is set up for success.

What does humble leadership look like?

- Listening. The humble leader listens to the opinions and feedback of others. They don't assume that their ideas are always the best.
- Asking for feedback. A humble leader asks those around him for constructive feedback. They realize that they don't know everything and need the valuable advice of others.
- Admitting wrongs. Every leader makes mistakes. The best, most humble leaders admit when they've made mistakes. This creates an environment where others feel like they, too, can admit their mistakes.

- Respect. The humble leader is respectful of others. They value the insights and opinions of others and do everything they can to respect what others bring to the table.

St. Augustine said, *“Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. Do you plan a tower that will pierce the clouds? Lay first the foundation of humility.”*

Humility is fundamental to success as a leader. Humble leaders thrive, while proud leaders ultimately falter.



THE OPTIMISTIC LEADER



9

The Optimistic Leader

BY CHERYL PRUITT

The cocky guy dominates a party or a meeting by spouting the latest self-development guru about achieving one's dreams. Is that what you think of when you think of an optimist? Or maybe it's the mousy doormat of a person who doesn't have the gumption to tell anyone the sky is falling. Neither image is accurate when thinking of an optimist.

Leading with optimism is not "feeling" cocky or denying reality. It's living with a set of skills and habits that can be learned--skills and habits that can be practiced, fine-tuned to your unique personality, so they become ingrained into who you are, not just an image you project.

We'll start with a few descriptions and definitions of an optimistic leader then discuss some of the most important skills and traits they have. We'll end with some examples of how you can affect your team with your optimistic leadership. Included are a few pithy "Truth Takeaways" for easy learning.

Choose Optimism

An Optimistic Leader maintains a hopeful and confident attitude about the future. They communicate a positive outlook to others. Hopeful, confident expectation of good is a short, to-the-point definition. It's easy to see why carrying that around can and will influence and motivate others.

Truth: Optimism is a choice and a state of mind. Optimistic leaders practice positivity and optimism with intentional skills.

Multiply Optimism

Optimistic practices engage the pre-frontal cortex or the decision-making part of the brain. It is not developed in the parts of the brain that are reactive and impulsive. Therefore, demonstrating actions such as gratitude and forgiveness, which are decisions, not feelings, not emotions, increase optimism.

An optimistic leader will engage in self-care. Self-care is crucial for the optimistic leader to be present and available when implementing solutions or removing obstacles. She'll realize that her gratitude and forgiveness practices change the environment, and her mental, emotional and physical well-being makes it possible for her to be there.

Truth: I get to choose every day where I focus my energy and attention. By being healthy, I'm more likely to be optimistic.

Team Optimism

An Optimistic Leader focuses on solutions to problems. She doesn't just recount the same problem repeatedly. She'll remove obstacles blocking progression to success.

Increasing the habits outlined above, even in small ways, can cause big and impactful qualities that are important to build and lead teams in businesses, organizations, families, churches as they seek to navigate today's complex environment.

Truth: I can positively affect the world when I lead others to implement solutions to the problems we see around us.



THE INFLUENTIAL LEADER



10

The Influential Leader

BY CHERYL PRUITT

Whether it's at the table in your kitchen or the table in the boardroom, you want to become a better leader. While you seek to increase your influence in the lives of others, one area of influence is vital to your growth—the influence you choose in the form of your mentor or mentors.

If influence is an inflow, then a mentor is a faucet. The junction or intersection where you let it enter the vessel. The vessel being you: your mind, your capacity, your ability to think or to produce. The story of Esther tells us she knew the value, the necessity of having and learning from a wise, capable and experienced mentor.

It begins in the house of her older cousin, Mordechai. She learned much from him, with an obedient and grateful heart for the protection and provision he brought to her life as she was an orphan.

He “brought her up” and “took her as his own daughter” when her parents died in the Babylonian captivity (before the end of the 5th century B.C.) Esther 2: 7. We see how she continued to receive Mordechai's advice, counsel, and even his rebuke, which gives us another insight into the role of a mentor.

As Hadassah moves into the palace and becomes Esther, we see her again understand and utilize the concept of influence as she “pleased and obtained favor” from Hegai, the keeper of women for the King. Her influence on this authority figure, her supervisor, if you will, increased her capacity and her ability to

produce something (something that eventually resulted in the ultimate promotion...wearing The Crown).

She allowed, even welcomed, his influence on her, as he advised her on the “one thing” she would take into her night with the King. She knew being influenced by a trusted mentor served her well in the past, and this man’s knowledge and experience could make or break her big opportunity. She asked for and then followed his “suggestion.”

Esther’s story provides examples of various types and means of influence. The role of mentors in her life was foundational to her success and vital to her survival.



THE DECISIVE LEADER



11

The Decisive Leader

BY JENNIFER TATE

Being a decisive leader is where things happen. It is where potential and all the other great attributes of a principle-based leader ignite. This convergence can then be walked out in three key steps, **assess or analyze, mindset mindfulness, and action**. To make a decision, the leader must apply the plan to **choose, minus any fear, and take action**. It sounds simple yet is often intimidating, and many could-have-been great leaders get stuck at one of these steps. It takes practice and **with practice comes progress**.

Let's dive into these steps, the plan, and address some of the great roadblocks leaders need to know.

Assessment is the first step. The leader has to look at the question at hand.

What are the facts? If you placed all your emotions on a shelf then made a decision, what would your answer be based on the greatest outcome for the majority of those affected? Who are those that would be affected? It is vital to consider these questions to determine everything that needs to be assessed for the greatest decision.

Who has wisdom on the subject matter? Who has experience or input into the topic being discussed? **Wisdom is priceless!**

Those in the trenches working on the projects and those with experience carry great keys of wisdom that allow for a well-rounded perspective. Tapping into your intuition, core values, and seeking wisdom from the Word is vital to making a decision. The leader must ask themselves, does this align with my core

values, is it right, true, noble, pure, righteous, patient, kind, boastful, envious, proud, praiseworthy, or just? And those are just a few plumb lines to determine how a decision should be made.

Leaders must be mindful of their mindset. This is really where the battleground lies. There is **NO room for decisions to be made through the lens of fear.** Fear is always a liar and will keep a leader from reaching their potential. A cousin to fear is the perfection complex or analysis paralysis. The fear of looking wrong, doing wrong, and not being enough. There is also fear of failure as well as fear of success. Identifying these deceptive mindsets will allow them to be eliminated and replaced with new mindsets and new truths. And that is what repentance is, acknowledging the poor mindset and replacing it with truth, over and over. Always take your thoughts captive. You do not have to agree with your first thought if it does not align with your values or truths. When a leader obtains the **ability to check their mindset with truth, wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, they will excel in decision-making with more confidence and ease.**

Action is the dynamite! All the decisions in the world can be made, but without action, they are a waste. The greatest problems could be solved if leaders would step up and take action. To be a great leader, **YOU MUST HAVE ACTION BEHIND YOUR DECISIONS!** As a great decisive leader, it is important to take action and delegate actions steps to those you lead. Then follow up with them to make sure the greatest decision was made and implemented.

The ability to thoroughly assess, be mindful of your mindset, and tap into wisdom and resources is vital to putting action behind the decision. Assessing the facts and weeding out the feelings will help a leader make powerful decisions and put them into action. **A Great Leader Must Choose, Minus Fear, and Take Action!**



THE DISCIPLINED LEADER



12

The Disciplined Leader

BY JENNIFER TATE

With leadership, discipline does not mean punishing people. Rather, **discipline refers to being in complete control of oneself.** A highly effective leader must be self-disciplined in all areas. Those under the leader will see evidence of the leader's lifestyle, and a disciplined life should be contagious.

Discipline should encompass every area of the leader's life.

Consider these areas:

1. **Health.** A leader knows that they must be in good health if they're going to lead others effectively. They discipline themselves to eat in healthy ways, exercise, and make other smart health-related choices. It does not mean they have to miss out on the good stuff, but just need to be mindful of moderation. Everything is permissible if it does not cause harm to your body and is not used as a coping mechanism or addiction. It is a personal decision that only you as a leader can make to choose what is beneficial fuel your body runs best on.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do you eat healthy foods?
- What does my body run best on?
- Do you take supplements?
- Regularly exercise?
- What type of exercise is best for my body and metabolic type?
- Do you get sufficient sleep?

2. **Time.** Perhaps more than anything else, a leader must be disciplined with their time. They must do things efficiently, focusing on the job in front of them and making swift progress through their to-do list. It's easy to get sidetracked during the day, but the best leaders can maintain focus.

Ask yourself these questions. Do you...

- Allow yourself to be easily distracted during the day?
- Have specific goals you're focused on achieving?
- Have a system for ensuring that you make progress on your to-do list?

3. **Guard Input.** You may have heard the saying, 'guard your heart and mind'. It is essential that disciplined leaders guard what they allow themselves to watch, listen to, or conversations they engage in. Although it is important to be informed on what is going on and have a pulse on the world and vision, the wrong input can destroy a leader and a mission. Only accept information that is factual and not speculation or gossip. Verify and check the resource the information is coming from. You cannot expect to take in the negative, profane content and give away positive vibes.

4. **Vision.** The leader is disciplined to stay focused on their vision. They don't let other "shiny" objects distract them from their ultimate purpose and vision. They ensure that they and those who follow them stay laser-focused on getting the right things done all the time. They identify the distractions and can discern what can wait that will take them off mission versus what must be attended to right away.

Ask yourself these questions. Do you...

- Have a single-minded focus on your overall vision?
- Become easily distracted from your most important tasks?
- Consistently remind both yourself and the followers of your vision?

Jim Rohn said, “Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment.”

You’ll never achieve your highest and greatest goals if you’re not disciplined. If you’re able to hold yourself to the highest standards, you’ll achieve success beyond your wildest dreams. Discipline is a choice you can choose when dedicated to being focused on your core values, Truths, goals, mission, and vision.



THE CONFIDENT LEADER



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The Confident Leader

BY JENNIFER TATE

If you want others to follow you, you must be **confident** in your overall vision and the approach you take to making that vision a reality.

What exactly is confidence? It's an inner belief you can achieve what you set out to do as long as you do your best. It's the personal assurance **you can accomplish whatever you put your mind to** and that **nothing is too great to achieve**. It's the belief nothing too challenging for you to accomplish when you do your best.

But isn't confidence something you're born with?

Not necessarily.

Confidence is born out of action.

The more action you take, the more overall success you'll have. The more success you have, the more confident you'll feel, which will lead you to take more action. This leads to more confidence, and this positive cycle continues baby step by baby step.

Yes, sometimes, you fail. Sometimes, your ideas don't pan out and your best efforts fall flat. Sometimes, even your best-laid plans go to pieces. These are moments to note your experience, write it down, and learn from what went right and what went wrong. **This is where wisdom is gained.**

In those moments, you'll be tempted to give up. Your confidence will lag, and you may doubt your ability to accomplish things.

This is where perseverance comes into play. Taking the knowledge and wisdom gained from the prior attempts and applying that to the next try. Staying in the game and trying again will increase the leader's confidence.

Avoid giving in to that temptation! To be a confident leader, it's critical that you **keep taking action, moving forward, and striving for your goals.** Turning setbacks into wisdom and continuing to move forward is crucial.

Winston Churchill said, *"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."* It's the courage to continue taking action that makes for a great, self-confident leader. The **best leaders are inherently confident, and they're confident** because they've consistently taken action and learned from their mistakes.



THE SELF-MOTIVATED LEADER

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The Self-Motivated Leader

BY JENNIFER TATE

First, a leader is self-motivated. Unlike followers, who must be told what to do, a leader is **highly self-driven and motivated**.

A leader is often out in front of the crowd yet can often be found serving in the background, **moving things forward**. They **identify what needs to be done and take action on their initiative** without being told to do so. A leader must be able to drive things forward without the approval or permission of others. They can see that **some action is better than no action at all**.

They must have an innate **desire to make change happen**, even when they can't see exactly how it will happen. They know how to assess the situation and think of strategic solutions, then put them into action. Even when the next step is unseen or unclear, they continue to move forward toward the result.

A leader isn't primarily motivated by salary or social perks. They have a fire within them. A **powerful desire to make good change happen**. They stay focused on the result, the greater mission and stay aligned with **their core values and Truths**.

Daniel Goleman puts it this way:

Plenty of people are motivated by external factors, such as a big salary or the status that comes from having an impressive title or being part of a prestigious company. Those with leadership potential are motivated by a deeply embedded desire to achieve for the sake of achievement.

How can you grow in self-motivation?

The primary way is by **choosing a goal** (or set of goals) that resonates with you deeply and ignites your passions to accomplish great things. Starting with small, achievable, bite-size goals will help develop confidence and, in return, motivation.

Think about your own life and career. What sorts of things do you really, truly want to accomplish? What goals set you on fire and make you want to take massive action? What objectives would you be willing to sacrifice for? The **possibilities are limitless** when we think outside of the box.

It's those out-of-the-box things that create motivation. Focus your attention on them. Write them down. Rehearse them again and again. The more you're focused on your big, audacious goals, the more you'll be motivated to want to achieve them.

What is your B.ig H.airy A.udacious G.oal?

What is that thing that looks too big to achieve yet sparks your passion when you think of being there? What is that thing that looks too difficult to do based on where you are right now? What is that thing you and others would think is an extremely bold goal? What do you see as an achievement that indicates you reached that moment of convergence, allowing you to leave a legacy of change and success.

Think of the greater whole impacted. Assuming your goals involve more than just yourself, you'll also be motivated to get others on board with your goals. **Others will be motivated** as they watch you lead and follow you because of **your great leadership**.



THE BELIEVING LEADER

The Believing Leader

BY KEADREN PETRONE

As Leaders, our influence hinges on what we believe. Our words and actions are imperative in living out the example of our belief. It is the acceptance of something that exists or something true. Taking that statement even a step further, belief is an action. It's not just *knowing* the path, it's *walking* it out.

Examining the beliefs we hold about ourselves are the primary first steps in becoming powerful and influential leaders. Intentionality needs to take place inconsistently checking our feelings, our thinking, and our behaviors. If we spend time believing we are an imposter or we fill our heads with self-doubt, how could we possibly instill belief in the others within our sphere? Our ability to self-lead directly affects our ability to lead others.

Leaders need to believe in not only themselves but also the abilities of their team. Would you follow a leader that isn't confident in their vision? Would you model the behavior of a leader that doesn't seem to know their path? Would you want to work in an organization where the leader can't delegate tasks because she doesn't believe in her team's abilities? When you lead by example by showing the belief in your abilities and confidence in the goals you want to achieve, you create an environment rich in the motivation to thrive. The consistency of our actions emulates true integrity and fortifies an environment where the others around you believe just as much as you do.

Showing up each day with the mindset and actions that move towards the organization's goal reinforces the beliefs for yourself

and builds trust and optimism among the team. Let's face it; if we hang around a confident and consistent leader full of decisive belief, it encourages us to move up to the same level.

Risk-taking is an important piece in showing you are a believing leader. It signifies that growth is your top priority, and you are unwilling to stay paralyzed. It engages you to move past the fear and step forward anyway. To become a believing leader, courage and inspiration are needed to move into action. It's like watching a powerful movie. Inspiration allows us to move past the perception of limitations and initiates the belief that the mission can be accomplished.

Great leaders often show exponential amounts of confidence. Do not mistake ego for confidence. The ego is driven by inward self-important behavior. Confidence spreads and takes enormous amounts of humility to operate well. Confidence is an outward reflection of an inward belief.

Optimism is welcomed and required by believing leaders. It is foundational in achieving and setting goals, influencing others, and maintaining focus. To be a powerful believing leader, you must be prepared to fail often. We all know that failure isn't fun, yet we wouldn't be able to grow without it. It's better to make a move toward your purpose than to make no move at all. It's been said that Thomas Edison made approximately 10,000 attempts at inventing the lightbulb, but he just succeeded at finding 10,000 ways it won't work. Failure makes growth possible.

The tireless belief in your mission embodies and inspires trust, honest actions and builds confidence in yourself and others in your sphere of influence. Belief empowers us to keep persevering and pushing forward even when it feels hard or impossible. It takes consistency, courage, and grit. The believing leader will operate from a place of having a decided heart and take daily actions to further the overall mission and purpose of a successful organization.

What steps will you take today to become a believing leader?



THE COLLABORATIVE LEADER



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The Collaborative Leader

BY KEADREN PETRONE

There are countless movies out there about teamwork and collaboration. I love the movie, *Remember the Titans*. This movie is based on a true story back in the early '70s dealing with racism and centered on a high school football team. The setting is not only around the clear struggle between black and white but, more deeply, its overall message about love, humility, and collaborative action that won me over. The battle between humility and ego was real. It was humility that led the team to success.

Teamwork is about overcoming adversity, finding solutions, and remaining tirelessly optimistic. To successfully collaborate with others requires setting aside your agenda and working towards the mission at hand.

One of the hardest lessons I have ever had to learn about working with a team is the lesson of humility. Humility and ego can't exist in the same room. It's that simple.

Some of the very best leaders are also the most humble. As a leader, it is imperative to leave your ego at the door. The ego is operating in self-importance. Anyone carrying around their ego will quickly stand alone. This attitude will sabotage your team and your overall mission. Your organization will flounder, and your team will lack motivation. Who wants to support a leader constantly putting themselves first, unaccepting of new ideas and feedback, or trying to do most tasks on their own?

I have had experiences with some poor leaders. It left me feeling

undervalued, irrelevant to the team, and inherently distracted from the overall goal. But working with a humble leader allows for a different experience altogether.

A Leader that exhibits an attitude of humility will be reflected by the ability to accept and own failures, even when they may or may not be theirs. The Leader will often make countless sacrifices to benefit the team. Humility is the posture needed to ask for and accept constructive criticism and feedback. This will bring awareness, allow the team room to grow and learn and motivate them to action. Collaboration should be a beautiful relationship between the Leader and the Team, allowing each individual's unique gifts to shine.

One of the best pieces of collaboration is the diverse characteristics of each member. Understanding one another's strengths and weaknesses, gifts, talents, and passions drive the team toward success. Where one person falls short, another can come alongside them and add their strength or talent. Taking the time and effort to learn these intricate moving parts about one another will enhance the way the team operates. This builds trust and symmetry so each person can rely on one another.

A great Collaborative Leader can earn respect by the way they honor the members of the team. Building engagement, offering support, and understanding the team's diversity allow the organization to seamlessly move toward the mission. With a heart posture of humility at the helm, a Collaborative Leader can lift the organization to new heights, continuously setting new goals and conquering adversity.



THE PASSIONATE LEADER



The Passionate Leader

BY ANGEL GOBEL

If you will be an effective leader, you need to have passion. It should feel like a fire in your soul - a powerful force that makes you come alive. It gets you excited! It resonates through every fiber of your being! It's what drives great leaders to accomplish great things.

When you're driven by passion, you'll find your power to achieve goals and attract even more power along the way. That's because your passion will cause others to rise and come alongside you. Passion is the key to influence.

To be effective as a passionate leader, you need to have passion within you for people. If you don't, you shouldn't be in leadership. Now, I'm not saying you can't have passion for something other than people, but if you are going to "lead," then people are part of the equation. This is not about being a "people person." It's about respecting and caring for others, so it is both right-thinking and a key to detecting and directing the gifts of others. Passion should promote connection.

If your drive is not fueled by passion, you'll only get so far before burnout sets in. Just being driven can help you "push" yourself, but passion will "pull" you toward realizing your vision.

Vision activates passion. If you feel a lack of passion, it's probably due to a lack of vision. So, what do you do about this?

Start by being honest with yourself. Do you like what you do? Do you feel fulfilled and significant in your job or daily routine? If not,

it may be time for a change.

Maybe you need to get a different job, start your own business or serve others who can benefit from your experience. Maybe you need more ambitious goals to focus on - goals that push you to grow your gifts, talents, and abilities, solve bigger problems, or stand up to injustice. Dig deep. Discover what moves your heart. Then, you need to convince yourself you're worth it.

Take action with your words. Speak positive affirmations over your life - your family, your abilities, and your dreams. Don't be afraid to speak boldly! Focus on what you're grateful for and speak it as much as you can. A grateful heart will transform how you carry yourself and how others see you. It clarifies vision and ignites passion!

As a passionate leader, I desire to see women experience freedom in their identity - knowing who they are, owning their gifts and passions, and walking in victory.

Years ago, I was fortunate enough to have powerful women come alongside me and encourage me during some of my toughest challenges. Their actions affected me to my core and positively and powerfully transformed my life in a way that will last forever. Now, I consider myself blessed and fortunate to be part of a powerful community of women positively impacting the world! Let me encourage you: Don't trade hope and a future for a past reality! Don't let excuses become reasons! Find your passion! The world is waiting for you to show up and be YOU!



THE COURAGEOUS LEADER



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The Courageous Leader

BY ANGEL GOBEL

The essential attribute of a leader is courage. All the other characteristics that make a great leader spring from courage. Courage reminds me of the deep roots of a tall, well-planted tree with determination, perseverance, and humility branching outward from its sturdy center.

Maya Angelou said, “Courage is the most important of all the virtues because, without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently.”

Life seems designed to test your character as a leader, even if you don't think of yourself as one. Life brings a calling to rise and walk in victory. Courage cannot guarantee a certain outcome, but you will never achieve your greatest outcome without it. You won't step forward; you won't speak up. You'll become comfortable with the lie you have little or nothing of value to offer, and no one wants to hear from you anyway.

Even if you've felt this way, I want to assure you that courage is still within your reach. You can have it IF you decide to take it. Courage is already in you, and that courage is alive! It is a fire of truth, fueled by the will not to give up.

Have I been to the other side and felt the pain of hopelessness? Yes, but I knew I didn't want to settle there. I decided it was worth it to walk out my purpose. I determined not to give up! I wrote down powerful and encouraging words and started speaking them over my life several times a day every day. Courage opened the door to victory in my situation.

Let's dig into three characteristics of courageous leaders I live by:

- Determination - Deciding it's worth it to finish what you start. A courageous leader has the conviction to stand on their own two feet. When they encounter resistance and setbacks, they stay grounded and emotionally stable. They summon their courage and move forward again.
- Perseverance - Refusing to give up when life gets hard. A courageous leader doesn't allow an obstacle to hold them back. They will find their way around it, under it, over it, and, when all else fails, through it.
- Humility - Being willing to trust others and knowing when to speak up or sit down and listen. A courageous leader comes alongside and helps their teamwork boldly. They will find the hidden value in people - the gold - and not be afraid to elevate them. They know how to speak life over their teams.

Some fears come with being a courageous leader. Will I always get it right? Will I always know what to do? NO! You don't have to have all the answers to be a courageous leader, but you need to be willing to try and then try some more. You have to refuse to give up, and quitting is NEVER an option. It's your job as a courageous leader to lead and guide others according to their strengths. Courageous leadership doesn't just happen. It's something you learn by doing, and when you display great courage in the face of adversity, people will follow you. They'll admire and be inspired by your courage and want to do the same!



THE SEASONAL LEADER



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The Seasonal Leader

BY DENISE WEATHERMAN

We go through seasons in life and leadership. What are you facing during this season in your life?

We all lead in one form or another within our family, jobs, ministries, but how are we leading. Is it the results we want to see, and if not, could it be that we are being led by "feelings" rather than by purpose.

Ecc 3:1: To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under Heaven. The "Law of the Harvest" is easiest to see at work in agriculture. There is planting the seed, time for seeds to cultivate and grow, and then the harvest. Times continue changing, but one truth about life and leadership remains the same, we reap what we sow.

In leadership, many leaders get drawn into their "feelings" of the season and waste the environment to do particular things. We go through seasons based on "feelings" vs. based on what the season was created for.

Are you planting in a season that when harvest time comes, you are disappointed by the outcome? Great leaders are those that first lead themselves. It is during those seasons of leadership change and growth will happen. If we want to be great leaders, we will need to learn how to lead ourselves first, and this will take faith to be open and honest with ourselves while learning the skills we need.

Let's look at the Seasons of Leadership while keeping in mind the "Law of the Harvest" ~

Leadership Spring - A time to invest in others and work hard on the cultivation.

Leadership Summer - A time to nurture the investment.

Leadership Autumn - A time to ensure your people and systems are ready to reap.

Leadership Winter - This season will depend on how hard you worked during the spring, and like many weather patterns, this can either feel short or extremely long. Winter is a time for recognition and reflection.

As a leader who has been through many seasons of change and growth, I learned to lead myself first before leading others, and as you lead yourself, you will reap the joy of the harvest while investing in and cultivating your team. It is a win-win for everyone!



THE EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT LEADER

The Emotionally Intelligent Leader

BY LISA SWANSON

EQ. Is that a thing? What does it mean? Do I have to be emotional or have a high IQ? What is this crazy thing we have seen throughout the years yet have not been educated on? Get ready to learn more about yourself and others as we dive into this simple yet not always so easy-to-do topic.

Emotional intelligence, aka EQ, is the ability to understand and manage both your own emotions and the emotions of those around you. It's the ability to understand why you're feeling a certain way, along with how others are feeling, in a particular situation. Having high EQ will help you manage your own emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges and defuse conflict.

There will be many times when you find yourself in difficult, stressful, emotionally heavy situations. In those moments, it's imperative to understand why you're feeling a particular way so you can respond appropriately. If you simply fly off the handle and explode emotionally, you'll lose the respect and trust of those under you. You must self-assess and manage your emotions appropriately to handle emotionally difficult situations.

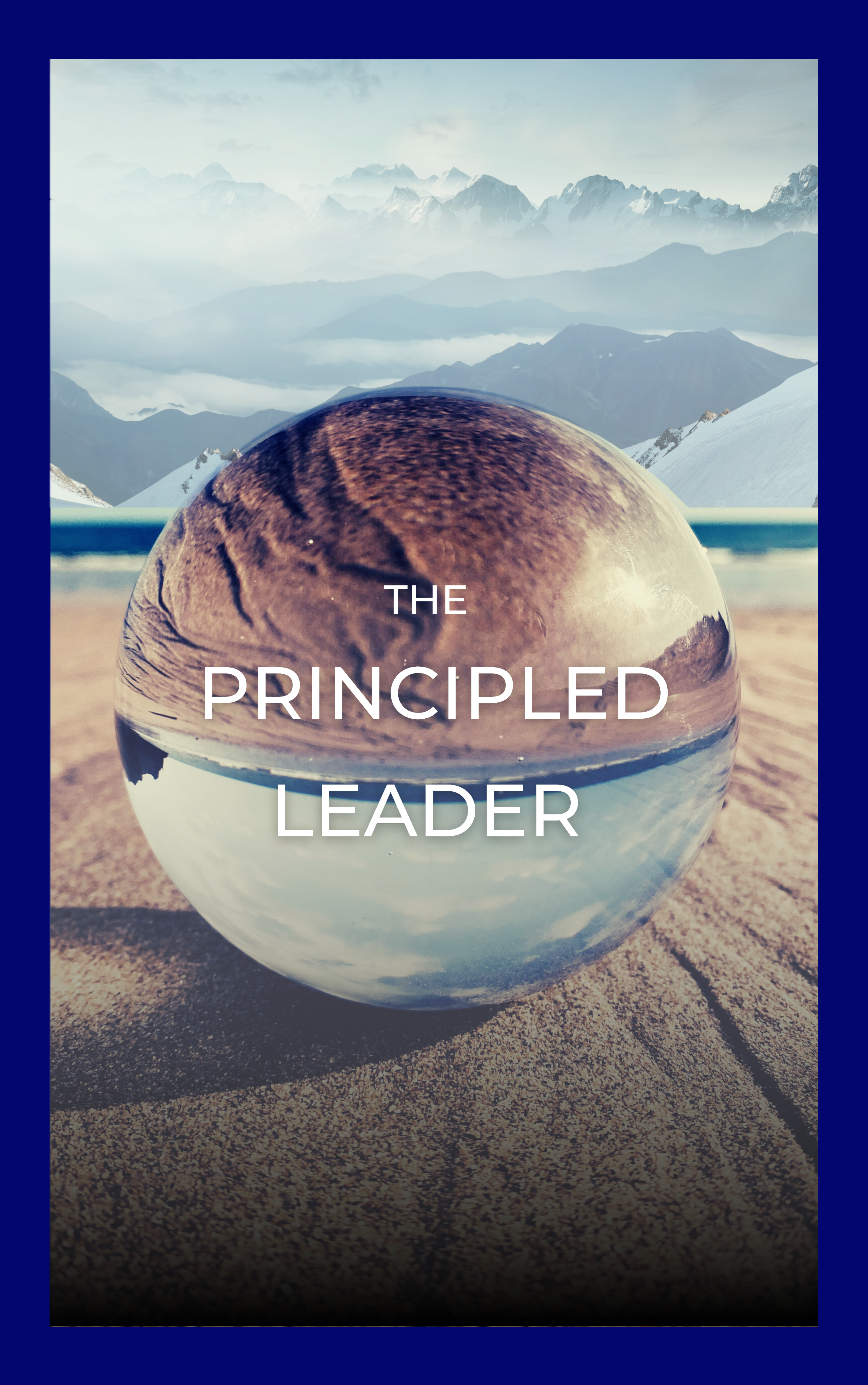
In the same way, it's helpful to understand why others are feeling specific emotions and why they act the way they do. An emotionally intelligent leader understands the dichotomy of empathy versus sympathy. Empathizing with how another person may feel without sharing their emotion demonstrates high EQ.

The skill of having empathy allows you to see things through the eyes of others. It enables you to put yourself in someone else's shoes and experience the same emotions yet gives you the ability to step back and respond in a less stressful, more positive way. The best leaders can keep a close handle on their emotions while helping others grow in EQ and manage their own labile emotions as well.

If you're unable to understand the emotions of others, you won't be able to navigate highly emotional situations effectively. You'll make decisions without considering the feelings of others, which can cause significant damage to your relationships.

So, you can see that EQ is not just about having emotions. It's about how we react to those emotions that will affect us and those around us. Having moment-to-moment connections with your changing emotional experiences is key to understanding how emotion influences your thoughts and actions.

We're all emotionally intelligent to a degree, but we need to take more time to self-assess and work on our emotions. EQ is fascinating! It will strengthen you personally and will bring your leadership skills to a higher level like never before. It's a process, it takes practice, and it is so worth it! You are so worth it!

A large, reflective sphere sits on a sand dune. The sphere's surface is highly detailed, reflecting the surrounding landscape: the top half shows a brown, textured mountain range, while the bottom half shows a blue sky with white clouds. The background features a vast desert landscape with rolling sand dunes and a range of jagged, snow-capped mountains under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset.

THE PRINCIPLED LEADER