

## PART V

# THE HANDS OF A GREAT LEADER

“Whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Matthew 20:27–28

We believe great leadership—*servant* leadership—is an inside-out job that begins with this key question: *Are you here on earth to serve or to be served?* Answering this question involves your *head*: in your mind you formulate your beliefs about leadership. However, people won’t have a clue what those beliefs are until you start to *do* something.

## GREAT LEADERS INSPIRE GREATNESS IN OTHERS

Hands provide a powerful symbol of the *doing* aspect of leading like Jesus. The Bible is filled with vivid images of Jesus’ hands at work. With His hands, Jesus healed the sick, cleansed lepers, fed the hungry, overturned the tables of the money changers, washed the feet of His closest disciples, and hung from a cross to save sinful human beings. With His hands, Jesus rescued the fearful, reassured the doubting, restored the fallen, and beckoned the already occupied to a higher calling and a special personal relationship with Him.

As varied as the work of Jesus’ hands was, it was always motivated by the same purpose: to point people to the holy and loving God; to help them recognize their sin; and to encourage them to name Jesus as their Savior and Lord, to know His love, His forgiveness, and eternal life. Jesus’ servant

leadership was grounded in the grace He extended to those He called to follow Him. He accepted people where they were, regardless of their past behavior and their sin. He committed Himself to their spiritual growth and the fulfillment of their highest purpose. As Jesus glorified God in His life, He got His hands dirty. In fact, He went beyond merely proclaiming what others should do to yield to God as Lord, to die to self, and to serve others; He demonstrated with His very life His willingness to serve.

At the end of His season of earthly leadership, Jesus summed up the work of His hands in His prayer to His Father: “I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do” (John 17:4). That work included teaching His disciples His message of grace, forgiveness, hope, and eternal life until they fully understood; protecting them from both external dangers and internal weaknesses; promoting unity and loving community; and preparing and equipping them to continue the work that He began in them.

In the next section we will show you how to become the servant leader Jesus wants you to be: you will learn what it takes to be a performance coach who produces great results and helps others find great human satisfaction. What distinguishes leading like Jesus from the philosophies of other performance management systems you might follow is the focus on helping people you interact with at home, at work, and in your community know the very real love of Jesus.

## THE LEADER AS A PERFORMANCE COACH

[Jesus] said to [Simon and Andrew], “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

Matthew 4:19 ESV

An effective Jesus-like leader acts as a performance coach. An essential duty of servant leaders is their ongoing investment in the lives of their followers.

Jesus was the preeminent performance coach, and He changed His leadership style appropriately as His disciples developed individually and as a group. When Jesus called His disciples to follow Him, He pledged them His full support and guidance as they became fishers of men. Jesus also empowered His followers to carry on the work of sharing the salvation message after He was gone. Through His *hands*—His effectiveness as a Servant Leader—Jesus was able to communicate to His disciples what was in His *heart* and His *head* about servant leadership.

So what does being a performance coach involve? These are the three basic components: performance planning, day-to-day coaching, and performance evaluation. Performance planning is the *leadership* aspect of servant leadership: providing direction and setting goals. Day-to-day coaching focuses on the *servant* aspect of servant leadership. That involves helping people win—accomplish their goals—by observing their performance, praising their progress, and redirecting their efforts when necessary. The third part of performance coaching is *performance evaluation*: servant leaders sit down with people and evaluate their performance over time.

Which of these three leadership activities do you think gets most of a

manager's attention? Most people guess performance evaluation—and, sadly, that is the truth.

Yet performance evaluation is often a flawed practice. If leaders rate all their people high, they would be accused of being too easy, and they themselves would be rated low. As a result, the normal distribution curve is alive and well. Managers are expected to rate only a few people high, a few people low, and the rest as average performers. When we ask managers, “How many of you go out and hire losers so you can fill the low spots?” everyone laughs. Of course leaders hire either winners—people who already have a good track record in what the managers want them to do—or potential winners—people who the managers think can become winners with proper coaching. Managers don't hire losers. Why, then, do leaders have to give a certain number of people low ratings?

In Ken's teaching example, *performance planning* means giving people the final exam ahead of time. In this goal-setting stage of performance coaching, the traditional hierarchical pyramid can stay upright: if there is a disagreement over goals, the leader wins because he or she represents the organizational goals.

When Moses went to the top of the mountain to get the Ten Commandments, he didn't take a committee with him. Otherwise, he would have come down with three commandments and seven suggestions. Similarly, Jesus didn't involve His disciples much in formulating the goals He came to accomplish. He had received those from the top of the organizational hierarchy—from His Father.

These two examples, however, do not mean that in our work in the home, community, and office we shouldn't involve others in setting goals. You certainly can collaborate at work, with experienced people, and at home when the kids get older. When goals are established, though, the organizational or life role leader is responsible for making sure the direction is clear. In their life role leadership in a family, parents have to take responsibility for setting goals and objectives. We all remember times when we would say to our mothers, “All the other kids are doing it.” If your mother was like Ken's, her response was always quick: “That's because their name isn't Blanchard.” Our parents were in charge of performance planning for us, their kids.

We can't emphasize enough the importance of clarity of purpose in the performance planning role of a servant leader. If there is not clear communication of what a good job will look like when it is accomplished, somebody will end up frustrated—the leader, the follower, or both.

Some organizations do a good job of performance planning. Unfortunately, after goals are set and distributed, they often are filed away and forgotten until

it's time for managers to evaluate their people's performances. Then everyone runs around frantically, trying to find the goals. To avoid this situation, leaders must engage in the most important element of servant leadership—*day-to-day coaching*—in which servant leaders help people reach their goals.

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

Think back to a time when you were involved in a failure in communication resulting in a vast difference between what was expected and what was delivered. Recall the frustration and wasted energy that could have been avoided by initially testing for understanding.

When it comes to *day-to-day coaching*, the pyramidal hierarchy turns upside down, and servant leaders begin to work for their people. Now that the goals are clear, this aspect of being a performance coach is about teaching people the right answers—in other words, helping them accomplish their goals—so that when they get their performance review, it really will be a review. This principle also holds true in the family: after family goals are established and communicated, parents can serve their kids by being their cheerleaders, encouragers, and supporters as they work to accomplish their goals.

Whether organizational or life role leaders, servant leaders are all about helping people get As. Servant leaders aren't threatened by people around them who perform well, because their confidence is secure in the unconditional love of God. Being rooted in God's love permits servant leaders to see and respond to the success of others in a different way: they celebrate it rather than fear it.

A perfect example of someone who helps people get As is Garry Ridge, president and CEO of WD-40 Company. After Garry heard about Ken giving his students the final exam questions at the beginning of the semester, he decided to implement the “Don't Mark My Paper; Help Me Get an A” philosophy for his company's performance review system, because that philosophy aligned with Garry's beliefs about leading and motivating people.

At WD-40, every manager meets with each direct report annually to discuss

the essential responsibilities set forth in that person's job description. Their discussion begins with the question "Is this still what you understand your job to be?" Once both parties are clear on the essential functions of the job, they work together to establish three to five observable, measurable goals for the coming year. This partnership aligns and clarifies expectations for both parties. Next comes day-to-day coaching—a key step in the process. The leaders continually diagnose their direct reports' development level for each goal and adjust their leadership styles to ensure they are giving the direct reports the appropriate amount of direction and support. If people attain their goals at the end of the year and live the company values as they do so, they will get an A.

When managers have come to Garry to tell him someone isn't working out and needs to be fired, Garry's first question is "What did you do to help that person get an A?" If the manager can't document the "Don't Mark My Paper" process, it's likely that Garry will fire the manager rather than the direct report. He has had to do that only a few times. Now managers all understand that their major role at WD-40 is to help people get As. Not only do the direct reports win, but so do the managers and the company.

Has this kind of performance planning and day-to-day coaching made a difference? In the last several years, WD-40 has had the highest stock price in company history. In its most recent employee satisfaction survey, filled out by 98 percent of the employees, the highest-rated statement was "I am proud to tell people I work for WD-40." Do you think the employees respond that way just because of their job responsibilities, or is it because they are in a work environment that makes people feel good about being involved? What a great example of how to achieve both great results and human satisfaction!

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

In this chapter, the emphasis has been on helping people become high performers. But leading like Jesus is much more than that. To Jesus, getting an A is beyond *doing* or performing. It is about *being* a person who models His character by serving others from a loving heart yielded to Him.

Read 1 Corinthians 13 and reflect on *doing* without *being*. The math is pretty simple: Everything – Love = Nothing!



## THE WORK OF THE CARPENTER

“Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary, and aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas?”

Matthew 13:55

Nothing about the life of Jesus was random or purposeless. His birth, death, and resurrection fulfilled messianic prophecy and thereby testified to a divine and perfectly executed plan. And, as with every aspect of His life, it was not by chance that Jesus spent thirty years in obscurity, learning all that God wanted Him to know while working as a carpenter. Evangelist Henry Drummond said, “What was Jesus doing in the carpenter’s shop? Practicing.”<sup>1</sup>

What was the significance of this season of practice and preparation? In what ways did working as a carpenter help prepare Jesus for His role as Messiah and, among other roles, performance coach?

We sought similarities between the work of a good carpenter and the work of a good leader, similarities that we could learn from and apply to our own leadership. Here is what we discovered:

- *Good carpenters and good leaders must be able to envision something that does not yet exist and then commit to do what it takes to create it.* Good leaders must have a compelling vision that they are passionate about and that provides direction for those who follow.

Application: Have you established a clear direction for your people? Do they understand what business the company is in (the purpose), where it is headed (the picture of the future), and what will guide the journey (the organization’s values)? Have you established goals? Have you communicated clearly enough that people know what to focus on right now?



- *Good carpenters and good leaders must be good judges of raw material.*

Application: The raw materials of leadership are people; therefore, good leaders must be able to assess both the current condition and the future potential of their people. How well do you know the people you lead? When was the last time you consciously updated your knowledge of them? It is easy and often convenient to operate under outdated assumptions about people, to instead focus time and energy on immediate concerns despite their short-term results. Investing regularly in your people, however, will have long-term positive results.

Also, the longer you rely on assumptions about people, the more prone you are to becoming isolated from the truth about them and ineffective in your leadership. What are some of the assumptions you have that, if inaccurate, could harm your working relationship?

- *Good carpenters and good leaders must consider the cost before the work begins.* Good leaders are realistic about the price of success, and they themselves must be willing to pay it, in full, before asking others to do the same.

Application: Jesus never downplayed the cost of following His leadership: He talked about dying to self, picking up a cross, and being persecuted. In His own acts of sacrifice and obedience, Jesus demonstrated His willingness to pay the price. Good leaders never ask anyone to do something they are not willing to do themselves.

- *Good carpenters and good leaders have a carefully defined plan for producing specific results.* A good leader serves the mission and values of the organization by focusing the means, materials, efforts, and development of people on the achievement of a specific goal and the fulfillment of a clearly communicated purpose.

Application: The plan Jesus has for producing the highest good remains the same two thousand years after He walked this earth: transform, inspire, and equip people to go forth into the world in His name, guided in love by the Holy Spirit, to make disciples of all nations.

- *Good carpenters and good leaders apply accurate measurements and standards of success to their work.* Good leaders accept responsibility for setting standards that reflect a balance between producing practical results and building healthy relationships.

Application: For Jesus, the measurement of His success was both to

glorify His Father and to obey His Father's will. Public perception of leadership performance does not tell the whole story: few would have seen a man hanging on a Roman cross as the supreme example of servant leadership. A true test of leadership, however, is the impact the leader has on the spiritual well-being of those he or she influences.

The standard to which Jesus calls all His followers in the relationships they have with one another is their relationship with Him yesterday, today, and forever: "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another" (John 13:34).

- *Good carpenters and good leaders must be able to master the use of a variety of tools and know when and how to apply them to get the best results.*

Application: A good performance coach realizes that people are not all at the same level of development. Some need a lot of direction, others need a lot of support, and still others need both direction and support.

- *Good carpenters and good leaders must be willing to be both lifelong learners and lifelong teachers.*

Application: Leaders who maintain a teachable spirit and stay alert to changing times and conditions will also maintain their effectiveness in guiding others. The resource Jesus provides to all His followers is access to the indwelling and counsel of the Holy Spirit. The challenge to all who lead in the name of Jesus is this: Are you willing to listen and learn?

- *Good carpenters and good leaders know when their work is completed.*

Application: In John 16:7 Jesus said to His disciples: "It is for your good that I am going away." Jesus knew He had completed His season of earthly leadership, and He commissioned His disciples to carry on His work.

How did Jesus' leadership of His disciples line up with these insights about carpentry and leadership? First, Jesus did indeed develop a compelling vision for His disciples that motivated them after His physical time on earth ended: "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).

Second, Jesus saw beyond current credentials to the long-range potential of those He called to become fishers of men. Getting to know His people was a key element of His leadership. Although He spent time teaching crowds of people and interacting with all sorts of individuals, Jesus spent most of His time with those who would comprise the next set of leaders in the movement He inspired.

The Bible tells how Jesus walked with them, ate meals with them, and got to know their strengths, their weaknesses, and their individual personalities. As Jesus learned about His followers, they learned about Him.

People are not born good carpenters or good leaders. They need someone to help them grow and develop. Jesus Himself learned carpentry skills from His earthly father, and He learned to be a Master Carpenter from His heavenly Father. He also learned leadership skills He would need to develop in His disciples—not to help them become good carpenters, but to help them become fishers of men.

Our next chapter highlights the fact that leaders are made, not born. It will help you become an even better performance coach as you learn about the variety of leadership styles Jesus used to help His disciples accomplish what He was telling them to do.

## THE WAY OF THE CARPENTER

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.”

Matthew 16:24–25

The big question people ask Lead Like Jesus is, “How do you help people get As?” In other words, how do you develop people into high performers? For the answer to that question, we can trace how Jesus transformed His disciples from untrained novices to masters/teachers and apostles for God’s kingdom. We will also consider the developmental process that Jesus surely experienced as He learned the carpenter trade from His earthly father, Joseph.

### A FOCUS ON PETER

As we examine how Jesus guided His disciples from call (“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men”) to commission (“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”), we will focus our attention on Jesus’ interactions with Peter. In his wonderful book *Twelve Ordinary Men*,<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur provides a compelling case for using the relationship between Jesus and Peter as an intimate case study of the transformational journey from call to commission:

Peter’s name is mentioned in the Gospels more than any other name except Jesus. No one speaks as often as Peter, and no one is spoken to by the Lord as often as Peter. No disciple is so frequently rebuked by the

Lord as Peter; and no disciple ever rebukes the Lord except Peter (Matthew 16:22). No one else confessed Christ more boldly or acknowledged His lordship more explicitly; yet no other disciple ever verbally denied Christ as forcefully or as publicly as Peter did. No one is praised and blessed by Christ the way Peter was; yet Peter was also the only one Christ ever addressed as Satan. The Lord had harsher things to say to Peter than He ever said to any of the others. All of that contributed to making him the leader Christ wanted him to be.<sup>2</sup>

There is another reason for focusing on Peter: we can see his transformation as we look at his own words.

At the beginning of his relationship with Jesus, Peter said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!” (Luke 5:8). During his apprenticeship, Peter challenged Jesus and was told, “Get behind me, Satan!” (Matthew 16:23).

Shortly after this startling incident, Peter was one of three disciples privileged to hear the audible voice of God say about Jesus, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!” (Matthew 17:5).

After following Jesus for years, Peter said, “I don’t know the man!” (Matthew 26:72).

Later in life Peter wrote: “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:3).

As we observe Peter in his transformational journey with Jesus, we see not only his pride and his fears on display, but his courage and his faith as well. What we see in Peter will give us an opportunity to examine how Jesus moved him from call to commission.

## **THE LEADERSHIP JOURNEY FROM CALL TO COMMISSION**

When Jesus first called the disciples from their ordinary occupations to become fishers of men, each brought his unique life experiences and skills to this new task—but absolutely no practical knowledge of how to fill this new role. During their three years under Jesus’ leadership, the disciples were transformed from untrained novices to fully equipped, divinely inspired, and spiritually grounded

leaders able to fulfill the Great Commission to go to all nations with the good news of Jesus Christ's death, resurrection, and love.

What did Jesus do to facilitate the disciples' transformation, to move them from call to commission? Although miracles were involved, the process was not miraculous. It simply entailed the perfect execution of a process familiar to leaders personally committed to accomplishing a goal through the growth and development of those they lead. We believe the experience Jesus had learning the trade of carpentry provided Him with a practical model for helping people grow and develop, a model that He used to guide the learning experience of His disciples and move them from call to commission.

As He learned the carpenter craft, Jesus probably walked through these four normal stages of learning a new task: *novice* (someone just starting out), *apprentice* (someone in training), *journeyman* (someone capable of working independently), and *master/teacher* (someone highly skilled and able to teach others). Jesus brought to His leadership a clear, firsthand understanding of the journey from dependence to independence.

## THE NEEDS OF A NOVICE

Novices are just starting to perform a particular task or to work toward an assigned goal. They need basic information about what to do, how to do it, when to do it, where to do it, and why it is important. Novices come in all sizes, shapes, and attitudes, from enthusiastic beginners excited about the opportunity to reluctant recruits being forced to learn. Novices also bring different personalities and learning styles. The one thing novices all have in common is the need for a leader who welcomes them into the learning process and gives them the information they need to get started.

Consider the following two examples of novices:

An excited pupil is a fifteen-year-old girl learning to drive. The day she gets her learner's permit, she is very enthusiastic, but she has little knowledge about driving a car. She needs someone to instruct her in the correct sequence of things to do before she turns on the ignition for her first drive. She doesn't need much motivation, because she already has a positive picture of what it will be like when she can drive herself and her friends anywhere she wants to go.

A reluctant recruit is a fifty-eight-year-old man learning to use a three-legged cane after suffering a stroke. The day he meets the rehab nurse who will teach

him to walk with a cane, he is filled with anger and embarrassment at having to learn to do something he has been doing all his life but now has to do in a new and unattractive way.

Both novices have to follow instructions that may be new or awkward. The teenager with a glamorized view of driving her friends to the beach the day she gets her license may be overconfident and impatient with the learning process. The stroke victim, faced with a new and unappealing view of the future, may bring resentment and frustration into the learning process. He needs someone to provide a realistic view of rehabilitation and establish the sequence and the timing of the steps involved in reaching his goal.

## **PAUSE AND REFLECT**

Think of a time when you were an untrained novice facing a new task or role. What did you need most from someone? Did you get what you needed? If not, what was the result?

### *Jesus and Peter the Novice*

As [Jesus] walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him. (Matthew 4:18–20 RSV)

Jesus saw in these hardworking fishermen the raw material for the future leaders of His ministry, which He would leave in their care when His season of earthly leadership was completed. In their enthusiasm, Peter and his brother Andrew literally dropped what they were doing when Jesus called them. Although he was enthusiastic, Peter had no idea how to accomplish this new task. At this novice stage of learning, Peter and the other disciples needed Jesus to teach them about their new work, and Jesus told them what to do and how to do it. When He sent the disciples out for the first time to preach the good news,

for instance, He gave them extensive basic instructions on where to go, what to say, what to do, and how to do it:

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

“Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts—no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep. Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave. As you enter the home, give it your greeting. If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. . . . I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.” (Matthew 10:5–13, 16)

## **PAUSE AND REFLECT**

Too often leaders in churches and other organizations set people up for failure and disillusionment when they do not respond effectively to the needs of novices. During this orientation and learning stage, show you care by providing specific direction to new recruits. Doing so makes a powerful statement about what you value—your people.

## **THE NEEDS OF AN APPRENTICE**

Apprentices have not yet mastered all the information and skills they need in order to work independently. They need a performance coach to set goals, provide learning opportunities, observe performance, and provide feedback in the form of praise for progress and redirection when required. Apprentices also need someone to put their progress in the right perspective so they don’t become overconfident with early success or discouraged with initial failure.



At the apprentice level, the teenager learning to drive has fastened her seat belt and started the car. As she pulls out into traffic and is startled by a car that seems to come out of nowhere, she begins to cry. Her instructor should praise her for fastening her seat belt and turning on the car correctly, but he also needs her to repeat back to him how the mirrors are to be adjusted and how she must look both ways to observe the flow of traffic.

At the apprentice level, the stroke victim learning to walk with a three-legged cane starts off well enough, but then he becomes frustrated and angry at the fact that it takes him many minutes to travel a distance he could previously cover in seconds. The rehab nurse needs to praise him for what he has accomplished so far and put his rate of progress in perspective even as she directs him to continue to the other side of the room.

It is vital that leaders provide clear direction and information and that they do so in a caring manner. Patience is a key aspect of love in action, an aspect essential to leading people through the apprentice stage. Keep the end result in mind and let the process of praising people for nearly correct behavior complete its work.

One more thing: the quickest way to stop the learning process is for the leader to grow impatient. Be obvious about the love you have for your followers, and always let your desire to lead like Jesus direct your behavior and fuel your patience.

## **PAUSE AND REFLECT**

Think of a time when you needed someone to push you beyond a failure or an easy early success to get to a higher level of understanding and performance. Now think of a time when you quit because nobody was around to help you step up to the next level.

Your direct reports, family members, or volunteers may experience those same feelings when they confront a task or a goal they failed at earlier.

What do these scenarios say to you about your role during this phase of training apprentices?

## *Jesus and Peter the Apprentice*

There was a time during Peter's apprentice training when he got something very right and then followed it up with something very wrong.

In Matthew 16:13–17, we read the following account:

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.”

Then, just four verses later, we read:

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!”

Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.” (vv. 21–23)

It is interesting to note that Jesus was teaching Peter in both these instances. In the first scene the teaching came in the form of high praise for getting something right (Peter identified Jesus as the Messiah and living God) and a realistic assessment of how the achievement was accomplished: God the Father had revealed the truth. In the second incident the teaching was delivered in bold language (“Get behind me, Satan!”) that highlighted the seriousness of Peter's erroneous thinking and behavior that, if repeated, would disqualify the learner. Despite the high drama of that moment of correction, Peter's learning process

continued in an even more dramatic fashion six days later.

In Matthew 17:1–9 we read:

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

There would be many more dramatic moments in Peter’s transformation—tests and trials that increased his knowledge of God and strengthened his faith, and experiences that God used to make him the anointed and effective leader he became. The constant throughout this transformational process was the loving commitment of the Leader to His follower during his apprenticeship.

## **THE NEEDS OF A JOURNEYMAN**

It is easy to assume that journeymen—people who have acquired some skills for performing a task or role—have progressed to a point where all they need from a leader is to be told when and where to apply their skills. The fact of the matter is that journeymen may periodically become cautious, lose confidence, or have a diminished sense of enthusiasm for their jobs. If ignored by inattentive leaders, journeymen may quietly drift into apathy or retreat from taking risks due to a sense of lost competence or a weakened connection to their callings.

In addition, journeymen who lose their skills or desire to perform may become disillusioned critics who poison the attitude of those working around them. Leaders who ignore the journeymen's need of appreciation, encouragement, and inspiration do so at the peril of the organization.

One example of a leader meeting the needs of a journeyman is the parent who lets the teenager regain her driving privileges after an accident that she admits she could have avoided.

Similarly, the rehab nurse is meeting the journeyman's need of encouragement when she reminds the stroke victim of how far he has come in gaining his new skill and how proud she is of him as he prepares to use his cane in front of his family and friends.

## *Jesus and Peter the Journeyman*

Peter exhibited behaviors characteristic of a journeyman when he walked on water:

When the disciples saw [Jesus] walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

"Come," he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" (Matthew 14:26–30)

Peter at this moment is a great illustration of someone capable of performing the task at hand. It took a tremendous amount of faith for him to step out of the boat and onto the churning water. So often we focus on Peter's cry for help that we forget that Peter actually *did* walk on water. In fact, he is the only one besides Jesus who has ever done such a thing. Peter's problem, though, came when he took his eyes off Jesus and began to worry about the storm. When Peter's confidence moved from high to low, his already demonstrated competence sank into the water with him.

Even though Peter had demonstrated the ability to walk on water, Jesus was there to provide the support Peter needed when he started to sink: “Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught [Peter]. ‘You of little faith,’ he said, ‘why did you doubt?’ And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down” (vv. 31–32).

What can we learn from the response of Jesus as Leader when Peter started to sink? First, we notice that Jesus acted immediately. He did not let Peter sink into the water and think about his mistake. Jesus let Peter know immediately that He was there to help him and support him.

Next, we observe that Jesus “reached out his hand and caught him” (v. 31). Jesus used a personal touch to save the floundering apostle. Jesus knew that Peter’s primary need was support, so He used His own hand to save him. Then Jesus reinforced His continued support of Peter when He said, “You of little faith . . . why did you doubt?” (v. 31). In other words, Jesus reminded Peter—and us—that He is always there when His followers need Him.

It is also important to remember that after Jesus caught Peter, they were still outside the boat. Imagine Jesus wrapping His arms around Peter and walking him back to safety. Providing support to the people around us is key to their continual development, whether in the office, the home, or the community.

## **THE NEEDS OF A MASTER/TEACHER**

Masters/teachers have fully developed skills as well as the confidence and motivation to independently produce excellent results; they also possess the wisdom and insight necessary to teach others. The masters/teachers you lead need to be given the opportunity and challenge to pass on what they know to the next generation of learners—and they need your blessing.

Examples of masters/teachers include the former driving student a few years later, riding along with her younger brother, who has his learner’s permit, and educating him on the rules of the road; and the stroke victim, now walking on his own as he visits the rehab facility to encourage new patients who are on the same path to independence that he traveled.

### **PAUSE AND REFLECT**

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19–20). Commissioning followers to go and teach others is the highest form of recognition a teacher can give a student. Fulfilling the commission is the highest compliment and act of gratitude a student can give a teacher. What are you doing to pass along to the next generation that which has been given to you?

## *Jesus and Peter the Master/Teacher*

The disciple’s training was complete, but a final set of questions had to be answered before this student could be certified as a master/teacher ready to lead others in the Teacher’s name. Listen to the conversation:

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”

“Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”

The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!” (John 21:15–19)

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

The connection between loving God and leading others in His name is irrefutable. You can't do one without the other in a way that would honor God and provide the best in both results and relationships.

On the last day of His earthly season of growing and developing His disciples, Jesus had some final instructions before sending them out in His name:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18–20)

How successfully Jesus had prepared His disciples for this high calling is evident when we read about Peter spreading the good news in Acts 2:36–41:

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

We can look at Peter here and see how, under Jesus' mentoring, he had been moved from call to commission. He demonstrated his ability as a master/teacher

when he spoke to a crowd of thousands, and three thousand people chose to be baptized that day. Peter had the knowledge he needed to effectively share the message of Jesus, and he also exhibited a high level of commitment as a master/teacher. Notice the boldness and authority with which Peter shared the message of Jesus. He truly was a fisher of men.

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

What is your desire for the people who look to you for leadership? More specifically, what do you want to be able to do for frustrated individuals who do not have the competence or commitment to accomplish an assigned task? And what do you want to do for those people who not only are able to do the task on their own but also can teach others? How can your organization most benefit from people who not only are good at doing their jobs but who also are willing and able to teach others?

Sending out someone to act on your behalf is the highest form of trust in that individual's competence and commitment. When Jesus gave the Great Commission to His disciples, He considered them masters/teachers ready to perform on their own. While Jesus would not be physically present to direct and support the disciples as He had for three years, He did not turn His back on them. He promised, "I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

One more comment about a master/teacher's needs. *Delegating* and *abdicating* are very different. Leaders who *abdicate* turn their backs on their now-trained people, walk away from the relationships they have established, and only become involved again if they happen to hear bad news. But leaders who *delegate* stay in the information loop and are ready to help if they are called. Jesus delegated when He issued the Great Commission, but He did not abdicate. Jesus knew His disciples would need Him in the future, and He remained ready and available to support or direct them whenever they called.





## LEADER-FOLLOWER PARTNERSHIP

For individuals to advance from novice to master/teacher, as this diagram<sup>3</sup> illustrates, they need leadership partners who can give them whatever direction and support they need to progress to the next stage of learning. A successful learner development process depends on the mutual commitment of leader and

follower.

Furthermore, we need to remember that no one is totally a novice, apprentice, journeyman, or master/teacher in all the things he or she does. For instance, at any one time in our work lives, we could actually be at all four learning stages. You could be a novice on the new computer program, an apprentice in budgeting, a journeyman when it comes to people development, and a master at planning. As a result, a leadership partner not only must learn to use *different strokes for different folks* but will probably end up using *different strokes for the same person*, according to the different aspects of their organizational development.

For a leader-follower partnership to be effective, certain things have to take place. Both leader and follower must

- understand the learning stages and the follower's needs at each stage;
- agree on goals and objectives for the follower;
- identify together the follower's learning stage for each goal;
- determine together what the follower needs at each stage for each goal and how the leader will provide it; and
- be aware when the follower is shifting to a new learning stage and what that means to their leader-follower relationship.

When leaders follow these steps, they are better able to help their people become high performers in their areas of responsibility.

## **PAUSE AND REFLECT**

Think about these leader-follower partnership steps. Have you done anything similar to the actions listed above to help your people become high performers? If not, what can you do to begin to make your relationship with your people a true partnership? Identify the first step you want to take and decide when you will implement it.

## THE EGO FACTOR

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Colossians 4:6

To be an effective coach, you have to meet people where they are. Yet, whether in the office, at home, or in the community, a servant-hearted leader confronted with a self-focused follower faces the twofold challenge of ministering to the heart of the follower as well as moving the learning process along. When your leadership is challenged or your motives and methods are mistrusted, keeping your EGO—your Edging God Out tendency—in check can be a daunting chore. Reacting out of pride, making decisions based on fear, or resorting to using position-driven power to exert your will can easily shortcut the learning process.

On the other hand, a servant-hearted follower confronted with a self-focused leader faces the challenge of being a positive witness to the leader while continuing to acquire the skills and experience needed to be productive and grow. It can be done, but it may be an uphill climb. An EGO-driven leader can create disillusionment and cynicism in even the most servant-hearted follower, resulting in an ineffective learning process.

For a leader, the quickest remedy for the EGO factor in leader-follower relationships comes with acknowledging and combating the propensity toward pride and fear. Furthermore, the leader's spiritual health encourages a follower's trust and commitment. If you seek to inspire and equip others to attain higher standards of performance and commitment, the best first step is modeling integrity in your own journey.

For followers whose self-worth and security are grounded in God's unconditional love and promises, it is important to keep a big-picture perspective

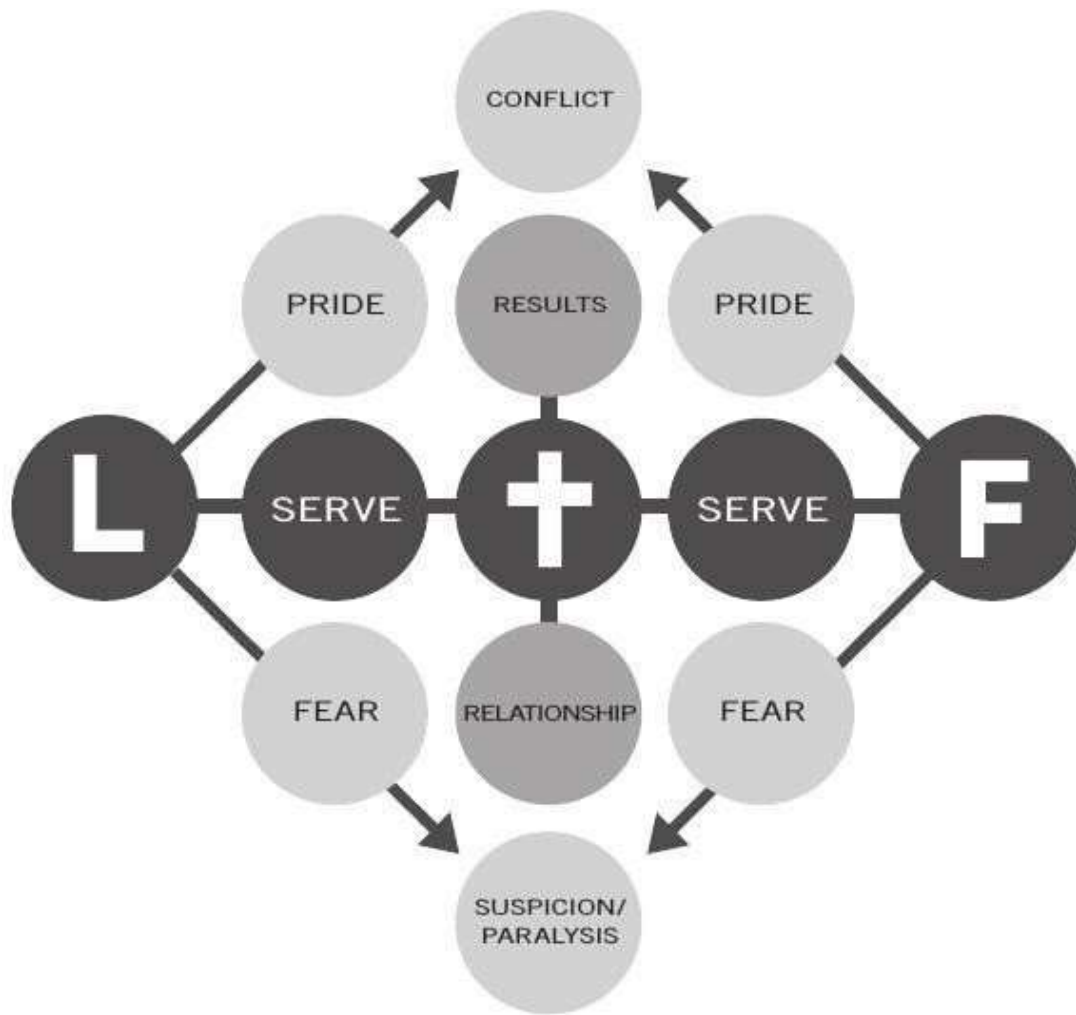
of what is to be gained or lost by responding to poor treatment by an EGO-driven leader. If both leader and follower are willing to share their vulnerabilities and support each other in keeping on track, the best of all results is possible—the true win-win-win situation. The leader wins, the follower wins, and God wins!

## **THE EGO FACTOR IN LEADER-FOLLOWER RELATIONSHIPS**

When grace abounds, results and relationships flourish. When there is strife, results and relationships suffer. Whoever extends grace promotes grace in the lives of others, and everyone benefits.

The true test of great leadership comes when the EGO of the leader and the EGO of the follower engage one another. How well they recognize and overcome the pride and fear in their relationship will determine whether they move toward the mutual satisfaction of commonly held goals—or share in frustrations of their own making.

The following diagram is an effective tool for understanding the EGO factor in leader (L)–follower (F) relationships. When things are not going well in a relationship, the diagram can help identify potential roadblocks to unity of purpose.



## **THE MOST FAVORABLE LEADER-FOLLOWER RELATIONSHIP**

*A Servant-Hearted Leader + A Servant-Hearted Follower = Results and Relationships*

The ideal relationship between leader and follower is characterized by mutual service and trust. Creativity and learning can occur, blind spots can be uncovered, and potential misunderstandings can be avoided. This is the true win-win-win situation.

*Example:* A mother and teenage daughter exchange information and reach a compromise on something.

*Example:* After sharing different opinions about the necessary level of training for a new skill application, the leader makes the final call and commits to changing his leadership style as the training progresses.

*Example:* A coach and a star player discuss a situation at the end of a game and agree on a plan to score the winning point. Both the coach and the player have their EGOs under control and are ready to listen and learn; both commit to implementing the final decision.

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

The ultimate example of a leader-follower relationship operating with a bond of mutual service was played out in the Garden of Gethsemane between Jesus and His Father: “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will” (Matthew 26:39).

## FOUR LEADER-FOLLOWER RELATIONSHIPS THAT ARE ALWAYS INEFFECTIVE

Undesirable patterns occur when pride and fear commingle.

### *1. A Prideful Leader + A Prideful Follower = Conflict and Competition*

When both leader and follower bring their pride into a relationship, a test of wills can result. Then, instead of cooperating and making concessions, the parties seek to promote their positions by winning arguments and showing off their strength.

*Example:* A championship coach with a ball-control strategy for winning meets a young superstar known for his brilliant individual skills.

*Example:* A father and son are too proud to say, “I’m sorry . . .” or “I need . . .”

## *2. A Fearful Leader + A Fearful Follower = Isolation and Paralysis*

When a leader and a follower are both fearful, they will be looking for early warning signs that their fears are justified. Initial evidence of goodwill is looked upon with suspicion, and reluctance to share information can be a barrier to facing problems as they arise.

*Example:* An insecure leader who fears loss of position and a follower afraid of being taken advantage of engage in a superficial exchange of mutual compliments and guarded responses to questions about the current state of things.

## *3. A Prideful Leader + A Fearful Follower = Exploitation*

When leaders impose their will and their way on their followers as a demonstration of their self-importance, it can play on the insecurities of the followers—leading to results that are not likely to be for the common good.

*Example:* A results-driven pastor intimidates his congregation into voting for a new sanctuary.

## *4. A Fearful Leader + A Prideful Follower = Manipulation*

When an insecure leader makes unwise concessions or tries to exert position power to gain the cooperation of a strong-willed follower, the results are damaging.

*Example:* A micromanaging team leader who fears losing control meets a prideful journeyman who responds with malicious obedience by complying with instructions he knows are faulty.

*Example:* A parent who is afraid of being embarrassed by a child's temper tantrum allows the child to keep the bag of cookies taken off the shelf in a grocery store.

## **FOUR LEADER-FOLLOWER RELATIONSHIPS THAT CAN BE IMPROVED**

Four combinations of leader and follower EGOs present specific challenges, but these relationships can be improved if one party is willing to serve as an agent of change. When that person is a leader, being the change agent is a ministry opportunity. When that person is the follower, it is a witnessing opportunity.

### *1. A Servant-Hearted Leader + A Fearful Follower = Ministry*

A servant-hearted leader remains patient with followers who act on their insecurities: the leader offers sincere reassurance by praising progress and honest effort.

*Example:* A physical therapist responds with patience and encouragement to outbursts of frustration and fear by a stroke victim learning to walk with a cane.

*Example:* A parent is patient with a child having a temper tantrum.

### *2. A Servant-Hearted Leader + A Prideful Follower = Ministry*

Servant-hearted leaders not only model humility and strength of purpose, but they also are willing to enforce standards and withstand challenges to their leadership.

*Example:* When His prideful disciples argued about who was greatest among them, Jesus responded by washing their feet.

### *3. A Prideful Leader + A Servant-Hearted Follower = Witness*



The follower is willing to risk a negative response from the leader in order to uphold a principle or correct an error.

*Example:* The prophet Nathan confronted King David regarding his misconduct with Bathsheba.

#### *4. A Fearful Leader + A Servant-Hearted Follower = Witness*

A follower responds to the leader's insecurities with humility and respect without forgoing principle.

*Example:* While being pursued by a fear-driven King Saul, David decided not to kill him when he had the chance.

*Example:* A college-bound daughter is patient with a parent who is fearful about her going away to school.

## **THE EGO FACTOR IN THE FOUR LEARNING STAGES**

As we have emphasized, we all fall short of perfection. Every day we have to confront our own EGO issues that can get us off purpose and affect the leader-follower relationship. Let's see what EGO issues leaders and followers might face at each of the four learning stages.

### *Novice Stage*

<b>Learner/Novice EGO Issues</b>	<b>Teacher/Leader EGO Issues</b>
Fear of failure	Impatience when teaching fundamentals
Fear of inadequacy	Frustration with slow progress
Fear of looking foolish	Temptation to delegate prematurely
False pride in position	Quick judgments of learners' potential
False pride due to prior performance	Fear of failure
Lack of trust in leader or in method of training	

### *Apprentice Stage*

<b>Learner/Apprentice EGO Issues</b>	<b>Teacher/Leader EGO Issues</b>
Discouragement with the lack of progress	Fear of failure
Impatience with the learning process	Frustration with lack of enthusiasm
Loss of faith in the learning process	Unrealistic expectations of people
Fear of failure	Fear of other people's opinions
Fear of inadequacy	Fear of criticism
Loss of faith in the leader	Fear of losing position
Diminished enthusiasm for the task	

## *Journeyman Stage*

<b>Learner/Journeyman EGO Issues</b>	<b>Teacher/Leader EGO Issues</b>
Fear of failure when moving into new situations	Lack of sensitivity and lost enthusiasm
Fear of success in expanded use of skills	Impatience
Burnout: loss of enthusiasm and vision	Fear of the intimacy required to deal with an individual's issues
Fear of obsolescence	Fear that the learner will surpass the teacher
Fear of competition	
Fear of being confronted about slips in performance	
Fear of being exploited	

## *Master/Teacher Stage*

<b>Learner/Master EGO Issues</b>	<b>Teacher/Leader EGO Issues</b>
Complacency with current knowledge of skills	Fear of personal competition from the completely inspired and fully equipped follower
Unwillingness to take criticism or direction	Fear of personal obsolescence when the learner can do what the teacher does
Arrogance	Unwillingness to share information or recognition
Misuse of skills for self-serving purposes	Fear of losing control

Aware of the potential EGO barriers in their relationship and willing to address them, leader and follower can seek individually and together to overcome these barriers through personal preparation, open communication, and a mutual commitment to serve one another and their relationship.

## **PAUSE AND REFLECT**

What kind of performance coach are you? Do your people know what you expect them to accomplish? Once you are sure your goals are clearly understood, do you focus all your efforts on helping your people win, accomplish their goals, get an A? Are you able to maintain a servant's heart even though some of your people are driven by false pride or fear? Be honest.