

# EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARY



BY  
Compiled KEN MORRISON

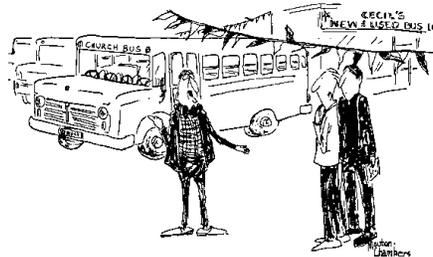
## THE 17 INDISPUTABLE LAWS OF TEAMWORK

BY: JOHN C. MAXWELL

### IN SUMMARY:

John C. Maxwell, who is known as America's expert on leadership and founder of the INJOY Group, an organization dedicated to helping people maximize their personal and leadership potential, offers in his book *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork* many insights into teamwork and team-building. Maxwell writes in a very practical and down-to-earth fashion that makes for an enjoyable and relatively easy read.

Maxwell outlines all seventeen laws of teamwork in an approach which allows readers to easily grasp and retain them. Every chapter of the book outlines one of his seventeen laws. Each of the laws has been given a catchy title, many of which are metaphorical in nature, followed by a short quip which in a single sentence captures the heart of each law. In every chapter, Maxwell breaks down the important parts of each law and then follows up in each chapter with a real life story that relates to and personalizes each law. These real life stories are effective at bringing more meaning to



How many drivers??^\$^%#^)



One steak, eleven hamburgers;  
One water, eleven cokes.

**“ JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING YOU DO DEPENDS ON TEAMWORK.”**

the reader.

In the science context, a law is an all-encompassing description of observed events. Maxwell's "laws" of teamwork are all-encompassing in two important ways. First, they encompass all people because everyone belongs to a team in one form or another. And secondly, it doesn't matter what type of team you belong to, these laws of teamwork effectively encompass every type of team there is. Whether it be a sports team, a school staff, an organization,

a group of volunteers or simply the team that includes just you and your better half, these laws hold true for any type of team. As Maxwell explains, "The wonderful thing about a law is that you can depend on it. No matter who you are, what your background is, or what circumstances you face, you can take these laws to the bank."

The fact that these laws apply to everybody and can be used by anybody no matter what type of team you are associated with makes this book a valuable read.

### Inside this issue:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| The Law of: Significance, The Big Picture, The Niche | 2 |
| The Law of: Mount Everest, The Chain, The Catalyst   | 3 |
| The Law of: The Bad Apple, The Compass, Countability | 4 |
| The Law of: The Bench, The Price Tag, The Scoreboard | 5 |
| The Law of: Identity, Communication                  | 6 |
| The Law of: The Edge, High Morale                    | 7 |
| The Law of Dividends Conclusion                      | 8 |

**“YOU CAN DO WHAT I CANNOT DO. I CAN DO WHAT YOU CANNOT DO. TOGETHER WE CAN DO GREAT THINGS.”**

**-MOTHER THERESA**



# THE LAW OF SIGNIFICANCE

## One Is Too Small a Number to Achieve Success

### The Value Of Teamwork:

You cannot do anything of real value alone.

### Why Teams Are Important:

- Teams involve more people.
- Teams maximize a leader's potential.
- Teams provide multiple perspectives.
- Teams share credit for victories and blame for losses.
- Teams keep leaders accountable for the goal.
- Teams can simply do more than an individual

### Why Do We Stand Alone?

- 1) Ego- it marks a big step in your development when you come to realize that other people can help you do a better job than you could do alone.
- 2) Insecurity - some individuals fail to promote teamwork because they feel threatened by other people.
- 3) Naivete - some people naively underestimate the difficulty of achieving big things.
- 4) Temperament - some people are not very outgoing and simply do not think in terms of team building and team participation.

The belief that one person can do something great is a myth.

If a team is to reach its potential, each player must be willing to subordinate his personal goals for the good of the team.

“ There are no problems we cannot solve together, and very few that we can solve by ourselves.”  
- Lyndon Johnson

# THE LAW OF THE BIG PICTURE

## The Goal Is More Important Than the Role

### What's In It For Me?

People tend to lose sight of the big picture. In fact, some people seem to believe that they are the entire picture; everything revolves around their needs, their goals and their desires.

### It's All About The Team

Winning teams have players who put the good of the team ahead of themselves.

### Seeing The Big Picture

Every person on a team has a role to play. Good leaders continually keep the vision of the big picture before themselves and their people.

### What's Up With Big Picture Teams?

- 1) Look Up at the Big Picture - everything starts with vision –you need to have a goal.
- 2) Size Up the Situation - see large tasks as large opportunities.
- 3) Line Up Needed Resources
- 4) Call Up the Right Players
- 5) Give Up Personal Agendas - what's best for the rest ?
- 6) Step Up to a Higher Level - achieving something greater than yourself.

*If you think you are the entire picture, you will never see the big picture.*

# THE LAW OF THE NICHE All Players Have A Place Where They Add The Most Value

Great things happen when all the players on the team take the roles that maximize their strengths - their talent, skill and experience.

### When People Are In The Wrong Place

- Wrong person in the wrong place = Regression
- Wrong person in the right place = Frustration
- Right person in the wrong place = Confusion
- Right person in the right place = Progression
- Right person in the right place = Multiplication

### Put People In Their Place

- 1) You Must Know the Team - know the team's vision, purpose, culture or history.
- 2) You Must Know the Situation - know where the team is and what the situation requires.
- 3) You Must Know the Player - evaluate skills, experience, attitude, passion, potential, discipline and emotional strength of players.

### Start By Finding the Right Place For You

To find your niche: Be secure, Get to know yourself, Trust your leader, See the big picture, Rely on your experience.

When you discover your place, you will say, “ There's no place like this place anywhere near this place, so this must be the place.”



## THE LAW OF MOUNT EVEREST **As the Challenge Escalates, the Need For Teamwork Elevates**

Your Team Must Be The Size Of Your Dream !

### What's Your Everest?

- 1) What Is My Dream? - Nothing much happens without a dream.
- 2) Who Is On My Team? - Your potential is only as good as your current team.
- 3) What Should My Dream Team Look Like? - It's better to have a great team with a weak dream than a great dream with a weak team.

**Focus On the Team Not the Dream** - the challenge determines the kind of team you need to build

New Challenge.....Creative Team

Controversial Challenge.....United Team

Unpleasant Challenge.....Motivated Team

Changing Challenge.....Fast, Flexible Team  
 Long-term Challenge.....Determined Team  
 Diversified Challenge.....Complementary Team  
 Everest-sized Challenge.....Experienced Team

### How To Grow A Team

- Develop Team Members
- Add Key Team Members
- Change the Leadership
- Remove Ineffective Members

When the team you have doesn't match up to the team of your dreams, then you have two choices: Give up your dream or grow up your team.

The challenge of the moment often determines the leader for that challenge.

## THE LAW OF THE CHAIN **The Strength of the Team Is Impacted by It's Weakest Link**

### Your Team Is Not For Everyone

- 1) Not Everyone Will Take The Journey - some people don't want to change, grow or conquer new territory.
- 2) Not Everyone Should Take The Journey - some people have different plans or agendas and where you're going isn't the right place for them.
- 3) Not Everyone Can Take The Journey
  - they can't keep pace
  - they don't grow in their area of responsibility

- they don't see the big picture
- they won't work on personal weakness
- they won't work with the rest of the team
- they can't fulfill expectations for their area

### The Impact of a Weak Link

- 1) The Stronger Members Identify the Weak One
- 2) The Stronger Members Have to Help the Weak One
- 3) The Stronger Members Come To Resent the Weak One
- 4) The Stronger Members Become Less Effective
- 5) The Stronger Members Question the Leader's Ability

You lose the respect of the best when you don't deal with the worst..

Catalysts are get-it-done-and-then-some people

## THE LAW OF THE CATALYST **Winning Teams Have Players Who Make Things Happen**

### Three Kinds of Players

- 1) People Who Don't Want the Ball
- 2) People Who Want the Ball But Shouldn't
- 3) People Who Want the Ball and Should

### Characteristics Of A Catalyst

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1) Intuitive     | 6) Initiating  |
| 2) Communicative | 7) Responsible |
| 3) Passionate    | 8) Generous    |
| 4) Talented      | 9) Influential |
| 5) Creative      |                |

Catalysts are not consultants. They don't recommend a course of action. They take responsibility for making it happen.



## THE LAW OF THE BAD APPLE

### Rotten Attitudes Ruin A Team

The following 5 truths about attitudes clarify how they affect a team and teamwork:

1) **Attitudes Have the Power to Lift Up or Tear Down a Team**

Abilities + Attitudes = Results  
 Great Talent + Rotten Attitudes = Bad Team  
 Great Talent + Bad Attitude = Average Team  
 Great Talent + Average Attitude = Good Team  
 Great Talent + Good Attitude = Great Team

2) **An Attitude Compounds When Exposed To Others**

Several things on a team are not contagious. Talent. Experience. Willingness to practice. But you can be sure of one thing: Attitude is catching.

3) **Bad Attitudes Compound Faster Than Good Ones**

4) **Attitudes Are Subjective, So Identifying A Wrong One Can Be Difficult**

Someone with a bad attitude may not do anything illegal or unethical but his attitude may be ruining the team just the same. Some common rotten attitudes that ruin a team are:

- an inability to admit wrongdoing
- failure to forgive
- petty jealousy
- the disease of me
- a critical spirit
- a desire to hog all the credit

5) **Rotten Attitudes, Left Alone, Ruin Everything**

Talent is not enough to bring success to a team. Good attitudes among players do not guarantee a team's success, but bad attitudes guarantee its failure.

There's only one thing more contagious than a good attitude— and that's a bad attitude.

Most bad attitudes are a result of selfishness.

Great vision precedes great achievement.

Vision without strategy is little more than a daydream.

“ You must have a long-range vision to keep you from being frustrated by short-range failures. - Charles Noble

“ We don't work for each other, we work with each other.” - Stanley C. Gault

**There is no substitute for character. You can buy brains, but you cannot buy character. -R.Cook**

There's an old saying when it comes to teams: Either we're pulling together or we're pulling apart.

## THE LAW OF THE COMPASS

### Vision Gives Team Members Direction and Confidence

**Check Your Compass !**

A team should examine the following 6 “compasses” before embarking on any journey:

- 1) A Moral Compass ( Look Above ) - it helps all teammates to check their motives and make sure they are laboring for the right reasons. It brings integrity to the vision.
- 2) An Intuitive Compass ( Look Within ) - the true fire of passion and conviction comes only from within.
- 3) A Historical Compass ( Look Behind ) - it should make use of anything contributed by

previous teams in the organization.

- 4) A Directional Compass ( Look Ahead ) - vision provides direction for the team. Part of that direction comes from a sense of purpose and another comes from having goals, which bring targets to the vision.
- 5) A Strategic Compass ( Look Around ) - a goal won't do a team much good without steps to accomplish it
- 6) A Visionary Compass ( Look Beyond ) - getting people to reach their potential means challenging them.

## THE LAW OF COUNTABILITY **Teammates Must Be Able To Count On Each Other When It Counts**

Countability is the ability and desire for teammates to work together toward common goals. Team members who can depend on each other only during the easy times have not developed countability. It's being able to have faith in your teammates no matter what happens.

**The Formula For Countability:**

- 1) Character - countability begins with character because it is based on trust; if you cannot trust someone, you will not count on him.
- 2) Competence
- 3) Commitment
- 4) Consistency
- 5) Cohesion - the ability to hold together no matter how difficult the circumstances become.



## THE LAW OF THE BENCH

### Great Teams Have Great Depth

#### The Bench Is Indispensable

Reasons to honor and develop the players who may not be considered starters:

- 1) **Today's Bench Players May Be Tomorrow's Stars**
- 2) **The Success of a Supporting Player Can Multiply the Success of a Starter**
- 3) **There Are More Bench Players Than Starters**
- 4) **A Strong Bench Gives the Leader More Options**
- 5) **The Bench Is Usually Called Upon At Critical Times for the Team**
- 6) **A Bench Player Placed Correctly Will At Times Be More Valuable Than a Starter**

#### Today's Actions Build Tomorrow's Team

The future of your team can be predicted by 3 things:

- 1) **Recruitment: Who Is Joining the Team?**
- 2) **Training: Are You Developing the Team?**
- 3) **Losses: Who Is Leaving the Team?**

#### Phases Of An Organization And Its Revolving Door

A team will always have gains and losses. People are constantly coming into an organization while others leave it. The key to its future success is gaining a more effective person with each loss.

A great starter alone is simply not enough if a team wants to go to the highest level.

**When a team has a great bench, the options are almost endless.**

You cannot solve tomorrow's problems with today's solutions.

## THE LAW OF THE PRICE TAG

### The Team Fails to Reach Its Potential When It Fails to Pay the Price

#### Price Points:

- 1) **The Price Must Be Paid by Everyone**
- 2) **The Price Must Be Paid All the Time**  
Some people mistakenly believe that if they can accomplish a particular goal, they no longer have to grow. This "destination disease" makes us believe that we can stop working, stop striving, stop paying the price - yet still reach our potential.
- 3) **The Price Increases If The Team Wants To Improve, Change or Keep Winning**

There are really only two kinds of teams who violate the law of the price tag: those who don't realize the price of success, and those who know the price but are not willing to pay it.

#### 4) **The Price Never Decreases**

#### The Price of Teamwork:

- 1) **Sacrifice**
- 2) **Time Commitment**
- 3) **Personal Development**
- 4) **Unselfishness**

**If everyone doesn't pay the price to win, then everyone will pay the price by losing.**

**Your team will reach its potential only if you reach your potential**

"There are no victories at bargain prices."  
- Dwight D. Eisenhower

## THE LAW OF THE SCOREBOARD

### The Team Can Make Adjustments When It Knows Where It Stands

#### Why The Scoreboard?

- 1) **The Scoreboard Is Essential To Understanding**
- 2) **The Scoreboard Is Essential To Evaluation**

The scoreboard gives you continual feedback. Growth= Change. But when it comes to growth, change alone is not enough.

If you want to become better, you have to change in the right direction. You can only do that if you are able to evaluate yourself and your teammates.

- 3) **The Scoreboard Is Essential To Decision Making**
- 4) **The Scoreboard Is Essential To Adjusting**

**"When you give your best to the world the world returns the favor"**  
- H. Jackson Brown

If a team is to accomplish its goals it has to know where it stands.

The scoreboard provides a snapshot of the game at any given time.



## THE LAW OF IDENTITY

### Shared Values Define The Team

#### Defining The Team:

We've all seen teams that have a common goal yet lack common values. Everyone on the team has different ideas about what's important. The result is chaos. If everyone tries to do things his own way the team breaks down.

#### The Value of Values

Shared values are like:

- 1) **Glue** - values hold people together.
- 2) **A Foundation** - values provide a stable foundation which makes performing well and growth possible.
- 3) **A Ruler** - values help set the standard for the teams performance; values are often expressed in a mission statement.

4) **A Compass** - when individuals embrace strong values, they possess a moral compass that helps them make decisions.

5) **A Magnet** - a team's values attract people with like values to the team.

6) **An Identity** - values define the team and give it a unique identity.

#### Values Add Value to Your Team:

Go through the following process with your team:

- 1) **Articulate the Values**
- 2) **Compare Values with Practices**
- 3) **Teach the Values**
- 4) **Practice the Values**
- 5) **Institutionalize the Values**
- 6) **Publicly Praise the Values**

Just as personal values influence and guide an individual's behavior, organizational values influence and guide the team's behavior.

A team cannot share values if the values have not been shared with the team.

The single greatest way to impact an organization is to focus on leadership development.

Effective teams have teammates who are constantly talking to one another.

“ Unless it's dangerous or illegal for us to share it, we share it.”  
-Gordon Bethune

If I had to name a single all-purpose instrument of leadership, it would be communication.  
-John W. Gardiner

## THE LAW OF COMMUNICATION

### Interaction Fuels Action



#### Communication Culture:

Ideally you want an organization where cooperation and communication are pervasive so that trust develops among all members.

Creating positive change in an organization requires communication.

Communication increases commitment and connection; they in turn fuel action.

#### Communication On Your Team:

Good communication has to be developed in four areas on every team:

- 1) **From Leaders To Teammates**
  - good communication is never one-way; it should not be top-down or dictatorial.
  - the best leaders listen, invite and then encourage participation.
  - be consistent , be clear , be courteous.
- 2) **From Teammates To Leader**
  - good team leaders never want yes-men ,

they want direct and honest communication from their people.

-besides directness, team members also need to display respect when communicating with their leaders.

#### 3) Among Teammates

- be supportive
- stay current
- be vulnerable– develop relationships that go deeper than our masks of composure.

#### 4) Between the Team and the Public

-when approached by people from outside the group, team members must remember they need to be :

- Receptive
- Responsive
- Realistic
- when it comes to communicating to people who are not on the team, the most important quality a team can display is unity.



## THE LAW OF THE EDGE **The Difference Between Two Equally Talented Teams Is Leadership**

### Finding The Edge

Leadership is the edge that determines the success of the team. It is all about understanding players, bringing them together, and getting them to work as a team to reach their potential.

### Need A Lift?

Leaders are lifters. With good leadership everything improves. Leaders push the thinking of their teammates beyond old boundaries of creativity. They elevate other's performance, making them better than they've ever been before and they raise the expectations of everyone on the team.

- Leaders transfer ownership for work to those who execute the work.
- Leaders create an environment where each team member wants to be responsible.
- Leaders coach the development of personal capabilities.
- Leaders learn quickly and encourage others to learn rapidly.

### Turning the Tables On the Tables

Two misconceptions about leadership:

The myth of the head table - the notion that on a particular team, one person is in charge in every situation.

The challenge of the moment should instead often determine the leader for that challenge because every person on the team has strengths that come into play.

The myth of the round table - is the belief that everyone on the team is equal, all opinions count the same, and a team can function without leadership.

A team that tries to function like a democracy never gets anything done.

### Giving the Team a Head Start

Leadership is like a running head start for the team. They can anticipate what's going to happen and they get the team moving in the right direction ahead of time. And the more leaders a team develops, the greater the edge from leadership.

Look at any team that has achieved great success, and you will find that it has strong leadership.

Everyone is important but everyone isn't equal.

The greater the challenge, the greater the need for the many advantages that leadership provides.

## THE LAW OF HIGH MORALE **When Your Winning Nothing Hurts**

Really high morale helps the team to perform at its best. High morale can be a crucial difference maker. When a team has high morale, it doesn't just have to do deal with whatever circumstances get thrown at it. It creates its own circumstances.

### High Morale Is Great...

- 1) **High Morale Is the Great Exaggerator**  
-when an entire team is positive and all the players feel good about themselves, everything seems good.
- 2) **High Morale Is the Great Elevator**  
-when a team possesses high morale, the performance of its people goes to a whole new level.
- 3) **High Morale Is the Great Energizer**  
-no mountain seems too high; no project seems too difficult.
- 4) **High Morale Is the Great Eliminator**  
-because of the momentum and energy that come with it, problems just seem to disappear--no matter how big they are.

### 5) **High Morale Is the Great Emancipator**

-high morale releases the team or frees it up to reach its potential. The team then takes that breathing room to take risks and try out new ideas, new moves or new concepts that it otherwise wouldn't.

### The Four Stages Of Morale

- 1) **Poor Morale-- The Leader Must Do Everything**  
-Investigate the situation, Initiate belief, Create energy and Communicate hope.
- 2) **Low Morale-- The Leader Must Do Productive Things**  
-Model behavior that has a high return, Develop relationships with people of potential, Set up small victories and talk people through them and communicate vision.
- 3) **Moderate Morale-The Leader Must Do Difficult Things**  
-Make changes that make the team better, Receive the buy-in of team members, Communicate commitment, Develop and equip members for success.

### 4) **High Morale-- The Leader Must Do Little Things**

Keep the team focused and on course, Communicate successes, Remove morale mashers and Allow others to lead.

**When the Law of High Morale is working at its best, the leader boosts the morale of the team and the team boosts the morale of the leaders.**

"Leaders are dealers in hope."  
- Napoleon Bonaparte



## THE LAW OF DIVIDENDS

### Investing In The Team Compounds Over Time

#### How To Invest In Your Team

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1) <b>Make the Decision to Build a Team... This Starts the Investment in the Team.</b></p> <p>2) <b>Gather the Best Team Possible... This Elevates the Potential of the Team.</b></p> <p>3) <b>Pay the Price to Develop the Team... This Ensures the Growth of the Team.</b></p> <p>4) <b>Do Things Together as a Team... This Provides Community for the Team.</b></p> <p>5) <b>Empower the Team Members with Responsibility and Authority... This Raises Up Leaders for the Team.</b></p> | <p>6) <b>Give Credit for Success to the Team... This Lifts the Morale of the Team.</b></p> <p>7) <b>Watch to See That the Investment in the Team is Paying Off... This Brings Accountability to the Team.</b></p> <p>8) <b>Stop Your Investment in Players Who Do Not Grow.</b></p> <p>9) <b>Create New Opportunities for the Team... This Allows the Team to Stretch.</b></p> <p>10) <b>Give the Team the Best Possible Chance to Succeed... This Guarantees the Team a High Return.</b></p> |
|--|---|

Deciding that the people on the team are worth developing is the first step in building a better team.

The time , money and effort required to develop team members don't change the team overnight, but developing them always pays off.

## In Conclusion:

*The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork* provide the reader with a comprehensive set of “how to s ” and attitudes for building a successful team. The laws apply to all people on all types of teams.

What separates two equally talented teams from each other, in terms of one being successful and the other not , is often said to be chemistry - team chemistry. There is no “ law of chemistry ” , however, contained in Maxwell's book. Why? There is no law of chemistry because team chemistry is a complicated matter, made up of many component parts , that cannot be simply defined in short. Great team chemistry is really an amalgamation of many, if not all, of the seventeen laws of teamwork outlined in this book. This book contains all of the ingredients that go into creating great team chemistry in the form of Maxwell's seventeen laws. The more of these laws of teamwork that a team can assimilate into its arsenal then the greater the team's chemistry will be and, therefore, the more successful the team will be.

If you are the leader of a team of talented people and you desire your team to be successful in whatever you are doing, then you will want to build great team chemistry. The first step in building great team chemistry is knowing what the ingredients are that make it up— and you will find them in Maxwell's seventeen laws of teamwork! Happy team-building!

Where there's a will there's a way ; where there's a team there's more than one way.

**Even when you've played the game of your life, it's the feeling of teamwork that you'll remember.**

Ken Morrison  
3037 Eagle Crescent  
Prince Albert, Sk S6V 7P9

Phone: 306-922-0454

Email: klmorrison@shaw.ca.