



Leadership Gold by John C. Maxwell

Executive Book summary by Quin Kleiboer For EADM 424 and Professor Keith Walker

About the Author / Summary

John Maxwell is a prolific author and speaker on the topic of leadership. He has sold over thirteen million books. He has experienced the realities of leadership through his years as a pastor he is also head of EQUIP and INJOY which are stewardship services that aid church communities in building and expanding. *Leadership Gold* is a collection of lessons he has learned about leadership. These little nuggets of truth are expanded in individual chapters. This book summary seeks to mine through the chapters to bring forth leadership principles that are most pertinent to teachers and presents them in an abbreviated form.

Chapter 1: If it's lonely at the top, you're not doing something right.

"Leadership is relational as much as it is positional. An individual who takes a relational approach to leadership will never be lonely." (pg, 6)

Chapter 2: The toughest person to lead is always yourself

Keys to leading yourself:

- Learn followership
- Develop self-discipline
- Practice patience
- Seek accountability

Chapter 3: Defining moments define your leadership

How will you be defined?:

- Defining moments show us who we really are
- Defining moments declare to others who you are
- Defining moments determine who we will become

Types of defining moments:

- Ground breaking -Heart breaking
- Cloud breaking -Chart breaking

Defining your moments

- Reflect on defining moments from the past
- Prepare for defining moments in the future
- Make the most of defining moments in the present

Chapter 4: When you get kicked in the rear, you know you're out in front

How to hold up under criticism:

- Know yourself: This is a reality issue
- Change yourself: This is a responsibility issue

Consider - Who criticized me?

- How was the criticism given?

- Why was it given?

- Accept yourself : This is a maturity issue

Chapter 5: Never work a day in your life

Find your passion and do that.

"The world will belong to passionate, driven leaders...people who not only have enormous amounts of energy, but who can energize those whom lead." -Jack Welch

Chapter 6: The best leaders are listeners

Why listeners make effective leaders?

- Understanding people precedes leading them
- Listening is the best way to Learn
- Listening can keep problems from escalating

"Listen to the whispers and you won't have to hear the scream" –Cherokee proverb

- Listening establishes Trust
- Listening can improve the organization

Chapter 7: Get in the zone and stay there

How to find your strength zone:

- 1) Ask, "What am I doing well?"
- 2) Get specific
- 3) Listen where others give you praise
- 4) Check out the competition
(What is your competitive advantage?)

Chapter 8: A leader's first responsibility is to define reality

Guard against unrealistic thinking:

- Admit my weakness
- Embrace realistic people
- Ask for honesty from others

Chapter 9: To see how the leader is doing, look at the people

Revealing questions to ask about followers:

Are the people following?

"all leaders have two common characteristics: first, they are going somewhere; second, they are able to persuade other people to go with them" p77

Are the people changing?

"Good leaders inspire their followers to have confidence in them. But great leaders inspire their followers to have confidence in themselves." P78

Are the people growing?

"The growth and development of people is the highest calling of a leader."

Dale Galloway

Are the people succeeding?

"Leaders may impress others when they succeed, but they impact others when their followers succeed." P 80

Chapter 10: Don't send your ducks to eagle school

Meet people where they are at.

Chapter 11: Keep your mind on the main thing

Reverse the 80/20 principle which states you spend 80% of your time on 20% of pressing things which are often not the main important things.

Chapter 12: Your biggest mistake is not asking what mistake you're making

Recipe for a successful failure:

- 1) Admit your own mistakes and weaknesses
- 2) Accept mistakes as the price of progress
- 3) Insist in learning from your mistakes
- 4) Ask yourself and others, "what are we missing?"

Chapter 13: Don't manage your time manage your life

A good time steward does the following:

Leadership Action	Effect
Advance their overall purpose in life.	This helps them grow.
Underscore their values.	This brings them fulfillment.
Maximize their strengths.	This makes them effective
Increase their happiness.	This gives them better health.
Equip and coach others	This compounds their productivity.
Add value to others	This increases their influence.

Chapter 14: Keep learning to keep leading

To grow, you have to be intentional

Ten Characteristics of a growth environment

- 1) Others are ahead of you.
- 2) You are continually challenged.
- 3) Your focus is forward.
- 4) The atmosphere is affirming.
- 5) You are often out of your comfort zone.
- 6) You wake up excited.
- 7) Failure is not your enemy.
- 8) Others are growing.
- 9) People desire change.
- 10) Growth is modeled and expected.

Chapter 15: Leaders distinguish themselves during tough times

Chapter 16: People quit people and not companies

Five ways that leader losses the trust of their people	Five ways a leader builds trust
Acting inconsistently in what they say and do	Maintain integrity
Seeking personal gain above shared gain	Openly communicate their vision and values
Withholding information	Show respect for fellow employees as equal partners
Lying or telling half-truths	Focus on shared goals more than their personal agendas
Being closed-minded	Do the right thing regardless of personal risk

People quit people who:

- devalue them
- are untrustworthy
- who are insecure

Recipe for retention (engagement):

- Take responsibility for my relationships with others
- When people leave, do an exit interview
- Put a high value on those who work with me
- Put credibility at the top of the leadership list
- Recognize that positive emotional health creates a secure environment for people
- Maintain a teachable spirit and nurture passion for people

Chapter 17: Experience is not the best teacher

“The difference between average people and achieving people is their perception of and response to failure.” (p 157)

“Experience gives the test first and the lesson later.” (p158)

Chapter 18: The secret to a good meeting is the meeting before the meeting

Chapter 19: Be a connector, not just a climber

What is the difference?

Climbers	Connectors
think vertical	think horizontal
focus on position	focus on relationships
value competition	value cooperation
seek power	seek partnerships
build their image	build consensus
want to stand apart	want to stand together

Five qualities you may find will assist you to connect with others:

- 1) Appreciation
- 2) Sensitivity
- 3) Consistency
- 4) Security
- 5) Humour

Chapter 20: The choices you make, make you

Three critical choices to make:

Choice One - My standards for myself will be higher than what others might set for me

Choice Two - Helping people is more important than making them happy

Choice Three - My focus will be on the present

“Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to do better.” Pat Riley

Chapter 21: Influence should be loaned but never given

The value of influence:

Influence exists to speak up for those who don't have influence

Influence exists to speak to those who do have influence

Influence exists to be passed on to others

Chapter 22: For everything you gain, you give up something

What will you trade?

Trade	For
affirmation	accomplishment
security	significance
financial gain	future potential
immediate pleasure	personal growth
exploration	focus
quantity of life	quality of life
acceptable	excellent
addition	multiplication
first half	second half
work for God	walk with God

Chapter 23: Those who start the journey with you seldom finish with you

Chapter 24: Few leaders are successful unless a lot of people want them to be

Kind of people who help:

- Time Relievers
- Gift Complementers
- Team Players
- Creative Thinkers
- Door Closers
- People Developers
- Servant Leaders
- Mind Stretchers
- Relational Networkers
- Spiritual Mentors
- Unconditional Lovers

Chapter 25: You only get answers to the questions you ask

“He who asks is a fool for five minutes,
but he who does not ask is a fool forever.” –Chinese Proverb

“Millions saw an apple fall, but Newton was the one who asked why.” – Bernard Baruch

“Quality questions create a quality life. Successful people ask better questions
and as result, they get better answers” – Anthony Robbins

Ten questions to ask yourself:

Am I investing in myself? This is a personal growth question

Am I genuinely interested in others? This is a motive question

Am I doing what I love and loving what I do? This is a passion question

Am I investing my time with the right people? This is a relationship question

Am I staying in my strength zone? This is an effectiveness question

Am I taking others to a high level? This is a mission question

Am I taking care of today? This is a success question

Am I taking time to think? This is a strategic leadership question

Am I developing other leaders? This is a legacy question

Am I pleasing God? This is a faith question

Chapter 26: People will summarize your life in one sentence – pick it now

To accomplish this it is suggested to do the following:

- Choose today the legacy you want to leave others

“Most people don’t lead their lives; they just accept them.” John Kotter

- Live today the legacy you want to leave
- Appreciate today the value of a good legacy

Legacy: We must be mindful of the next generation

“We have made at least a start in discovering the meaning in human life when we plant shade trees under which we know full well we will never sit.” – D. Elton Trueblood

Evaluation of the book

As can be seen from the above *Leadership Gold* is a random collection of lists and questions. The author envisioned this book as a tool to aid a six month mentorship program, so each chapter is geared towards a lot of self-reflection. The content is given meaning through the author’s antidotal stories from his own life. For educators, I could see a lot of applications of the content within the book that would be important. In my opinion, being a teacher in today’s society involves incorporating modern leadership principles such as engagement and the building up of strong leaders for tomorrow. The content of the book is geared towards those who are in leadership and have already read various other leadership books. Overall, I enjoyed the book; It was a very easy read because of the lists and headings. I would recommend this book to people in that situation however for someone new to the field of leadership I would point them to a different book by John Maxwell.