

Courageous Leadership

Study Guide

(Bill Hybels)

<https://gracelead.co>

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Courageous Leadership

Bill Hybels

the function, instincts, and scope of what leaders
 must do

1-The Stakes of Leadership

Potential of the Local Church

Whatever the capacity for human suffering, the church has a greater capacity for healing and wholeness (IF the church is working right).

People with the gift of leadership are uniquely equipped to develop strategy and structures that provide opportunities for other people to use their gifts most effectively. For the church to work right, all of us must take our gifts seriously. Those with the gift of leadership must develop it and deploy it as they yield themselves fully to God.

*Rom 12:8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; **he who leads, with diligence**; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

Discussion

- In your role as leader, what do you do that demonstrates diligence?
- What do you do to further develop yourself as a leader?
- To what extent do you agree that leaders are key to helping a church live up to its potential?

2-A Leader's Most Potent Weapon

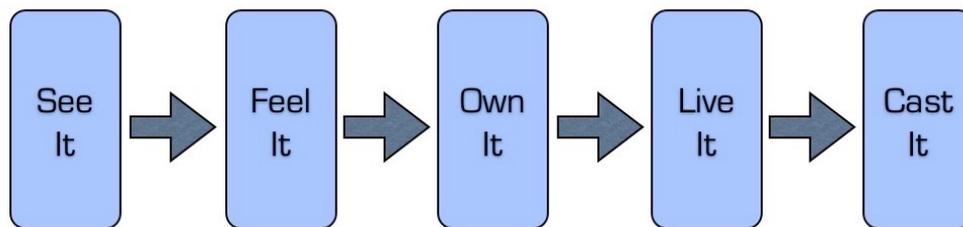
Vision is at the Core of Leadership

Pro 29:18 Without vision, people lose the vitality that makes them feel alive.

Vision = a picture of the future that produces passion.

How does a leader receive and convey a vision?

VISION PROCESS



1. First, a leader clearly sees a vision, a life-changing image that makes his/her heart race.
2. Next, the leader deeply feels the vision with energy and passion.
3. The leader then owns the vision and takes responsibility for it (**Acts 20:24**).
4. The leader begins to live the vision for all to see.
5. Finally, the leader casts the vision first to individuals and then publicly.

What can you as a leader do to be more receptive to the vision God wants to provide?

- Yield yourself fully to God.
- Ask God to show you **His** vision for your life.
- Pray and fast.
- Wait on Him in solitude.
- Clean up sinful patterns in your life.
- Remove distractions.

Why is a Vision Important?

- A vision can create energy that moves people into action. Most people carry around fuel in their hearts. They need someone to light a match by painting a compelling kingdom picture.
- Seeing a clear picture increases a sense of ownership. [Continue to cast the vision regularly to avoid vision leak.]
- A clear vision helps us see our destination and say, “no” to distractions. One church cannot be all things to all people. With a clear vision, we know

even some good things are not the best things for our vision.

Discussion

- To what degree is your organization’s vision energizing to you?
- When you receive a request, how do you make sure it is the best use of your time regarding fulfilling the vision?

3-Getting-It-Done Leadership

Teammates will not endure mere vision casting indefinitely. They need to see results. They need a step-by-step explanation of how to move from vision to reality. Also, leaders will give an account of how they used their gifts ([Heb 13:17](#)).

Strategic Plan

[1Cor 14:40](#)

1. Decide on your areas of emphasis (3-4).
2. Create goals for each area of emphasis. BHAG (big hairy audacious goals) 5-year goals.
3. Find a champion for each goal.
4. Align every ministry and person with the church-wide goals.

Was Jesus a Planner?

- At age 12, he told His parents that He must be about His Father’s business ([Luke 2:49](#)).
- His strategic plan included selecting and developing 12 leaders.
- His strategy for evangelism was concentric circles :Jerusalem > Judea > Samaria > end of the earth ([Acts 1:8](#)).

He promised to gift us, empower us, and walk beside us with the expectation that we will be serious about our Father’s business ([Mat 28:19-20](#)).

Discussion

- How serious are you about your Father’s business? Do you:
 - Pray regularly seeking His guidance for being a “get it done leader”?
 - Practice spiritual disciplines?
 - Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you as a leader.
 - Use the best leadership practices?
- What are your organization’s areas of emphasis?
- What goals do we have for each area of emphasis?
- Who is the champion for each goal?
- Describe how your ministry is aligned with church-wide goals.

4-Building a Kingdom Dream Team

There is a big difference between working with other people and doing life deeply with them as you serve together. Having God powerfully use you together is as good as it gets.

Jesus prayed that we would become one with Him, the Father, and with one another ([John 17:20-23](#)).

Steps to Build a Dream Team

1. Define the purpose of the team. This helps you know the characteristics you need for people on the team.
2. Select team members using the 3C criteria:
 - 2.1.Character: Choose people who walk with Christ and are honest, teachable, humble, and reliable.
 - 2.2.Competence: Choose people who have refined and developed their spiritual gifts ([1Tim 3:10](#)).
 - 2.3.Chemistry: Choose people who fit relationally with you and the team.
3. Build the performance of the team.
 - 3.1.First work on improving your performance as a leader: keeping them focused, maximizing their performance,

communicating effectively, drawing them together as a team.

- 3.2.Establish clear goals. What gets measured gets done.
- 3.3.Reward achievement of both your leaders and the volunteers who serve in supporting the ministries.

Discussion

- In what ways do you build the performance of your team? What could you change to be more effective?
- How clear are your team and individual goals? Do they meet the SMART criteria (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound)? How often do you gather data to measure goal progress?
- Hybels recommends public recognition. In what cases is this not a good idea? What are some alternatives for providing public recognition?

5-The Resource Challenge

Like it or not, the point leader must be the Chief Resource Raiser (CRR).

Truths about Resources

1. God is the ultimate resource supplier. People simply serve as conduits.
2. Under the right circumstances, people love to give. When you present the right people, the right kingdom opportunity in the right way at the right time, they will give with joy and generosity.
3. Raising resources proves the character of a leader. Financial challenges are an opportunity for spiritual growth. Scarcity should drive us to prayer and increased faith.

Principles of Raising & Allocating Resources

1. The Education Principle: Many people are clueless about the basics of Christian financial management. Hybels recommends a 2-3 week series on biblical money management every year plus other resources to teach budgeting and stewardship.
2. The Information Principle: There is no good reason to be secretive about finances. Anything less than full disclosure creates suspicion.
3. The KISS Principle: When it comes to finances, complexity kills. Keep it simple.
4. The Principle of Strategic Discipling: God wants us to develop the spiritual gifts He has given us. Some are gifted in giving. Just as you would disciple those with other gifts to grow closer to God and deploy their gifts, you should disciple

those with the gift of giving (**Rom 12:8**).
Challenge them to be faithful with their gift.

5. The Vision Principle: People want their giving to make a difference. Paint pictures to help people imagine the kingdom good their collective efforts will make.

Guidelines for Staff Resources

1. Pay staff fairly (**Luke 10:7**).
2. Give staff member the tools they need to do what you're asking them to do (**Deu 25:4**).
3. Discover what thrills the hearts of your key players and do your best to provide those things (**1Tim 5:17**).
4. When you pay pastors, be as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves (**Mat 10:16**).

Discussion

- Which of the principles of raising and allocating resources does your organization manage well? Where is our biggest opportunity for being more effective in raising and allocating resources.
- To what degree are you aware of the tools that your staff members need to do their jobs well?
- To what degree are you aware what thrills the key members of your team?

6-Developing Emerging Leaders

Unless you make a focused effort, leadership development will slip to the bottom of the agenda.

Phases of a Leadership Development Plan

1. Identify emerging leaders. Define the qualities that are important to you. Hybels recommends their ability to influence others, character, people skills, drive, and the capacity to learn.
2. Invest in the development of emerging leaders. Leaders learn best from other leaders (apprenticing). We must carve out time to invest in the next generation of leaders.

3. Entrust responsibilities to emerging leaders. To learn, they must have challenging responsibilities with real risk of failure. Pray for them, cheer them on, help them solve problems, and coach them to higher levels of effectiveness.

Discussion

Discuss how the phases of the leadership development plan that Hybels proposes are similar to identifying, recruiting, and developing an apprentice.

7-Discovering and Developing Your Own Leadership Style

To discover your leadership style, begin with this simple tool. For each style description, indicate how well it describes you and reflects what brings you energy and satisfaction.

[**1** = not like me, brings low energy and satisfaction, **5** = describes me well, brings high energy and satisfaction]

<i>Style Description</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
1-Have a vision clear in mind. Cast a powerful vision and never give up on the vision. Bring unrelenting enthusiasm and energy to casting the vision. Visionary Style					
2-Choose the right path for an organization as it approaches a critical intersection. Sort through numerous factors and options to pick the right direction. Directional Style					
3-Break vision into achievable steps. Seek to align all ministries to organization vision/mission. Challenge everyone to work the plan. Maintain focus. Strategic Style					
4-Bring order out of chaos. Organize people, processes, and resources to achieve vision/mission. Establish mile markers to measure progress. Managing Style					
5-Fire up people. Cheer on progress. Celebrate accomplishments. Help people see how important they are to the cause. Lift people's spirits. Motivational Style					
6-Build a team slowly. Listen patiently to team members. Pray for them diligently. Gently guide them. Nurture a sense of community. Shepherding Style					
7-Find and develop the right people with the right character, abilities, and chemistry to produce the right results. Skillfully place people in the right positions. Team-building Style					
8-Start new ministries. Turn over operations once something is started. Always look for something new to start. Entrepreneurial Style					
9-Turn around a troubled ministry. Tune up and revitalize departments or organizations. Fix it and release it. Correct mission drift and vision leak. Reengineering Style					
10-Draw together varied constituents. Help them realize they can meet their needs as they contribute to achieving the overall vision/mission. Bridge-building Style					

My Leadership Style(s)

List what you believe are your natural leadership styles (higher-numbered ones).

Discussion

- How well does your leadership style fit your current leadership role? If it does not fit well:
 - ▶ Is there a leadership role that would be a better fit?
 - ▶ What efforts are you making to meet the leadership needs that are not a match for your style?
- What can you do to develop your natural leadership style?
- What can you do to grow in your weaker leadership styles?
- From your observation, what are the leadership styles for those on your team? How well do they fit with their leadership roles? Are there adjustments you can make to match styles and roles?
- What can you do to help those on your team develop their natural leadership styles?
- Considering the current needs of your team (ministry, department, organization), are there leadership gaps (need for styles no one has)?

8-A Leader's Sixth Sense

Spiritually gifted leaders, over time, construct a value system and experience base that informs decisions they make. To observers, it may appear that they have a "sixth sense" when it comes to making decisions.

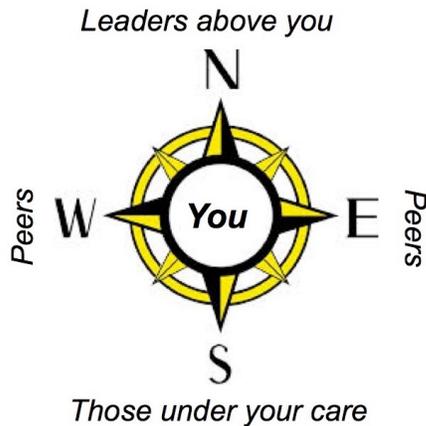
Data sources for building your value system and experience base include:

- What you believe.
- Your mentors and role models.
- Painful experiences.
- The Holy Spirit.

Discussion

- What are your top 3 core convictions that guide decision making?
- Who are your role models or mentors for various issues? (risk assessment, performance evaluations, excellence, morale)
- What painful experiences have you had that can help you be alert to the potential pain in a proposal? What can you learn from the painful experiences of others?
- Is the Holy Spirit the most valuable informer into your decisions?
 - ▶ Is there enough quietness in your life to hear the whispers of the Holy Spirit?
 - ▶ When you hear the Spirit's prompting, do you have the courage and determination to follow it?

9-The Art of Self Leadership



The best gift you can give those you lead is a healthy, energized, fully surrendered, and focused self [**1Sam 30:6**].

Discussion

- How sure is your calling [**Acts 20:24**]? Are you clear on the mission God has given you?
- What is your vision, the picture of the future God has given you? What are you doing about it?

- How fired up are you about the vision God has given you? What are you doing to stay fired up (reading, traveling, listening, observing)?
- What are your spiritual gifts? What are you doing to develop and deploy them?
- How committed is your character to Christ?
- To what degree are you clothed in humility [**1Pet 5:5**]?
- How well are you overcoming fear [**1John 4:4**]?
- In what way are your disappointments and insecurities undermining your leadership?
- Is your pace sustainable? How is it affecting others in your life? How often do you take time to regroup, reflect, and recalibrate?
- Compared to a year ago, how much has your love for God and others grown?

10-A Leader's Prayer

Hybels suggests that we consider aspects of leaders in the Bible and pray that God grant us the traits in them that we need. His examples were:

- Oh God, give me David's optimism so I can be a leader who inspires hope.
- God, give me a heart like Jonathan's with an enormous capacity to love.
- Oh God, I want to finish my assignment like Joseph finished his, without bringing reproach on You. Please give me the integrity of Joseph.
- God, give me Joshua's decisiveness [**Josh 24:15**].
- Oh God, give me Esther's courage [**Est 4:16**].
- God, I desperately need a portion of Solomon's wisdom.
- God, give me the emotional authenticity of Jeremiah so I can experience the authentic faithfulness of God [**Lam 3:22-23**].

- God, help me remember to celebrate like Nehemiah did.
- God, make me the kind of leader, like Peter, who knows how important it is to take initiative.
- God, give me Paul's intensity [**Php 1:21** and **2Tim 4:7-8**].

Discussion

- Which of these prayer requests resonate with you and why?
- Which leadership traits will you ask God to grant you?

11-The Leader's Pathway

As a leader, your greatest gift to others is a fully yielded heart. Hybels suggests that, just as there are different leadership styles, there are different spiritual pathways. Knowing which one best helps you get close to God is critical to your spiritual wellbeing. To discover your spiritual pathway, begin with this simple tool. For each statement, indicate how well it describes you and reflects what brings you into a satisfying relationship with God. (1 = not like me, 5 = describes me well)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1-Feel God's presence when praying with a group of people or studying the Bible in a group. Feel a spiritual dullness when trying to walk with God alone. Relational Pathway					
2-Must fully engage your mind to make spiritual progress. Your heart follows your mind. Thrive on reading, thinking, and research. Intellectual Pathway					
3-Feel closest to God when doing something for Him and serving others. Motivated to accomplish the work of God. Serving Pathway					
4-Can spend hours reflecting on the goodness of God. Feel closest to God when in quiet reflection. Contemplative Pathway					
5-Come alive in a highly challenging environment. Feel closest to God when you are right on the edge and crying out to Him. Long to give God every drop of yourself. Activist Pathway					
6-Relate to God most closely when surrounded by nature. Get an increased awareness of God in a natural environment. Creation Pathway					
7-Feel God's presence when praising Him and being in the presence of others praising Him. Get an overwhelming sense of being fully connected to God through praise. Worship Pathway					

Discussion

- What can you do to lean into your spiritual pathway? In what ways can you rearrange your schedule to maximize time that you spend in your spiritual pathway?
- What opportunities do you have to experiment with the other spiritual pathways? How could this help you appreciate other's spiritual pathways?
- In what ways can you help others identify their spiritual pathways?

12-Developing an Enduring Spirit

The Graduate School of Endurance

1. Make Your Calling Sure: Fulfill the exact ministry that God gave you (**2Tim 4:5**). Say, “No” to things that are not your calling.
2. Endure by Developing the Courage to Change: Examine yourself and your life (**1Tim 4:16**). Make changes that will help you prevail in your calling.
3. Endure by Discovering Safe People: Find people who you can trust with your deepest struggles (**Gal 6:2**). Ask for help.
4. Endure with an Eternal Perspective: We can endure if we have the right perspective (**2Cor 4:16-17**). We need to know our work is not in vain.

Discussion

- Specifically, what does God want you to do with the gifts He has given you? When was the last time you said, “No” to a request and why?
- What areas of your life are most difficult for you to change (personal habits, schedule, relationships...)?
- Is there someone you trust enough to share your deepest struggles and frustrations?
- What can help you maintain an eternal perspective?

13-Refusing God Nothing

God is constantly searching for those who are ready to refuse Him nothing (**2Chr 16:9**).

Only a truly courageous leader will wave the white flag of surrender and refuse God nothing.

Discussion

- What stumbling blocks impair your willingness to refuse God nothing?
- What could God ask you to do that would cause you to hesitate to do his bidding?
- How do you react when you haven’t sensed God’s presence for a time?
- Compared to a year ago, are you more likely or less likely to refuse God nothing? Why?