

The 5 Levels of Leadership

Proven Steps to Maximize Your Potential

(John Maxwell)

Summary



8500 West 159th Street
Overland Park, KS 66223
913.814.7223
www.VisitGraceChurch.com

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The 5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximize Your Potential

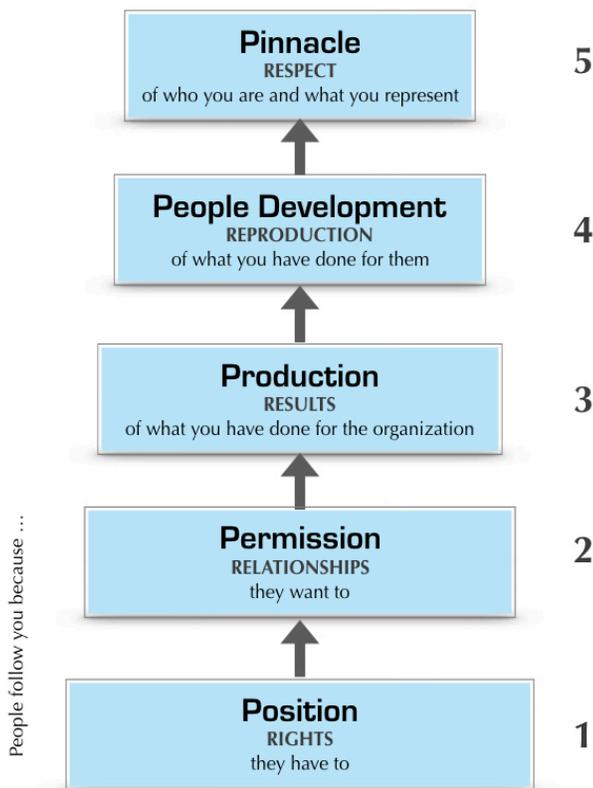
John C. Maxwell

Leadership is a process, not a position. Leadership deals with people and their dynamics, which are constantly changing. The challenge of leadership is to create change and facilitate growth.

The 5 levels of leadership are principles that provide steps for leadership growth.

This summary includes the upside, downside, and best behaviors for each Level of Leadership.

Overview



Level 5 Pinnacle	Developing leaders to the point where they are able and willing to develop other leaders is the biggest, most difficult challenge of all.
Level 4 People Development	When leaders develop other leaders, overall performance and teamwork increases.
Level 3 Production	When leaders get results, they can become change agents, taking people to another level of effectiveness.
Level 2 Permission	You can like people without leading them, but you cannot lead people well without liking them.
Level 1 Position	Position is a poor substitute for influence.

Insights Into the Levels

- As you move up a level, you don't leave the other one behind. You build upon it.
- Leadership is **dynamic**. It changes from relationship to relationship. You must earn your level of leadership with each person. That level can go up or down at any time.
- The higher the level you achieve, the easier it is to lead.
- The higher the level, the more you have to **pay** in energy, time, and commitment.
- Moving up levels occurs slowly; however it only takes one thing going wrong to instantly drop a level.
- The better the leaders are in an organization, the higher the productivity and morale of the people.
- Growing as a leader requires **intentional** growth and experience. Each step of growth requires further development of the leader.
- The higher the level of the leader, the more the environment supports the growth of others.
- Each time you lead a new group of people, you start the process at level 1. Be willing to prove yourself by developing relationships, being productive, and developing leaders.
- To succeed as a leader, you must help others follow you up the levels. **The entire process focuses on helping other people.**

Effective leaders interact with each follower based on:

- Where the leader is with that follower.
- Where the follower perceives the leader to be.
- Where the follower is on the levels of leadership.

Leadership Assessment

If you wish to do the assessment without marking in your book or making copies of the pages, try the following downloads.

Part 1-Leadership Level Characteristics

Take Part 1 of the Leadership Assessment.

Maxwell Leadership Assessment, part1

Put the results on the tally table at the bottom of the [Maxwell Leadership Assessment Tally](#) form.

Part 2-Individual Team Member Assessment- Leader's Point of View

- Make as many copies of the [Maxwell Leadership Assessment, part2](#) form as there are people that you oversee.
- Based on your interactions with each person, answer the questions.
- Tally the results of each form and put them on the [Maxwell Leadership Assessment Tally](#) form.

Part 3-Leadership Assessment-Team Member's Point of View

- Put your name and date on the assessment form. [Maxwell Leadership Assessment, part3](#)
- Make enough copies for all people that you oversee.
- Give a copy to each person who you oversee asking that they answer the questions and return it to you. They do not need to put their name on it.
- Tally the results of each form and put them on the [Maxwell Leadership Assessment Tally](#) form.

Part 4-Current Leadership Level Assessment

Fill out the tally table at the bottom of the [Maxwell Leadership Assessment Tally](#) form.

Level 1: Position

Upside of Position

1. It indicates that someone sees leadership potential in you.
2. You have some authority.
3. It gives you an opportunity to improve your skills.
4. It gives you an opportunity to define yourself as a leader (needs, strengths, values, habits, practices).

Downside of Position

You can fall into some traps in Position.

Trap	Reality
Thinking that title is most important.	Leadership is about action, not position.
Relying on position and devaluing people.	Leadership is about working with people.
Using politics to get what you want.	Politics lowers productivity and morale.

Placing rights over responsibilities.	Leadership is about serving others.
Being lonely.	Developing people prevents loneliness.
Getting branded and stranded.	Continuing to develop your skills opens opportunities.
Causing high turnover.	Working to develop yourself and others reduces turnover.
Receiving people's least (clock-watchers, just enough, mentally absent).	Giving your best and valuing your team members' contributions gets you their best.

Best Behaviors on Level 1

1. Stop relying on position to push people. Encourage them, find ways to help them, and take an interest in them as people.
2. Don't take things for granted and feel entitled because of your position. Keep working and focus on ways to make a difference in the lives of those you lead.
3. Take initiative. Help people win as a team.

Laws of Leadership at Level 1

- Law of the Lid: To increase your effectiveness, you must continue to develop yourself as a leader.
- Law of Process: Leadership development is a daily, lifelong process. Commit to that daily process.
- Law of Navigation: Know your limitations.

Beliefs That Help a Leader Move to Level 2

Before you can move to Level 2, you must embrace these beliefs:

1. Titles are not enough. The significance of the work you do and the impact it has on others is more important.

2. People are a leader's most valuable asset. Position is a tool you can use to help people.
3. A leader doesn't need to have all the answers. A leader can harness the power of shared thinking.
4. A good leader always includes others.

Guide to Growing through Level 1

1. Thank the people who gave you a leadership role or position.
2. Dedicate yourself to leadership growth.
3. Define your leadership (values, practices).
4. Shift your focus from position to the potential you have to make a positive impact.
5. Focus on the vision. Be clear on how you and your team can contribute to the organization's vision.
6. Shift from rules to relationships. Discover the value in each person and let each person know how he or she contributes.
7. Initiate contact with your team members. Don't wait for them to come to you.
8. Don't mention your title or position.
9. Learn to say, "I don't know." Make problem solving collaborative.
10. Find a leadership coach.

Level 2: Permission

Upside of Permission

1. It makes work more enjoyable. The focus changes from me to we.
2. It increases the energy level and makes the tone of interactions more positive.
3. It opens up channels of communication. Relationships become side-by-side. Communication is two-way. I hear, see and feel what you say and value who you are (Ting/Listen).
4. It focuses on the value of each person.
5. It nurtures trust.



Downside of Permission

You can fall into some traps in Permission.

Trap	Reality
Becoming a people pleaser.	You need to be both relational and productive.
Frustrating achievers.	You need to be both relational and productive.
Letting others take advantage of you.	Don't let others mistake kindness for weakness.
Hiding your weaknesses.	To develop relationships, you must be authentic.
Giving up because you are unlikable.	You can choose to like and care about people and share your more likable qualities.
Refusing to deal with the whole person	Conflict and messiness is part of the process of working with people.

Best Behaviors on Level 2

1. Take responsibility for yourself.
2. Think less in terms of systems and more in terms of people's emotions.
3. Treat others as you want others to treat you.
4. Become the chief encourager of your team.
5. Strike a balance between care and candor. Think, speak, and act in terms of who the person has the potential to become and how you can help them reach it. Give and receive candid feedback.

Laws of Leadership at Level 2

- Law of Influence: The true measure of leadership is influence.
- Law of Addition: Add value by serving others.
- Law of Solid Ground: Be a person worthy of trust.
- Law of Magnetism: Be the type of person you want to attract.
- Law of Connection: Work hard to relate to people.
- Law of Buy-In: Work hard to earn people's trust.

Beliefs That Help a Leader Move to Level 3

1. Relationships alone are not enough.
2. Building relationships require growing toward one another and with one another.
3. Achieving the vision as a team is worth risking relationships.

Guide to Growing through Level 2

1. Learn to genuinely like people.
2. Become the kind of person you'd like to have around you.
3. Learn to win both relationships and results.
4. Express value for each person on your team.
5. Know what each person values, their top concerns, and what they want in life.
6. Accept the whole person as part of leading.
7. Make having fun a goal.
8. Give your people your undivided attention.
9. Become your team's Encourager-in-Chief.
10. Be honest with people in a way that helps them. Balance care and candor.

Level 3: Production

Upside of Production

1. It gives the leader credibility when they do work with excellence and help others be productive.
2. It models and sets the standard for others.
3. It communicates the vision through action, giving people a clearer picture of what it means to fulfill the vision.
4. It becomes contagious, spreading productivity throughout the organization.
5. It creates momentum, making things easier.
6. It becomes the foundation for team-building as people want to be part of a winning team.

Downside of Production

You can fall into some traps in Production.

Trap	Reality
Thinking you're a leader when you're not.	Good leaders possess the desire to take the entire team to a higher level.

Folding under the responsibility.	The cost of leadership is to carry the responsibility of the team's success on your shoulders.
Hesitating to make difficult decisions.	You must make difficult decisions that affect yourself and others.
Discontinuing attention to Level 2.	You must keep developing relationships and caring for others as you produce results.

Best Behaviors on Level 3

1. Understand how your giftedness contributed to the vision. Focus your efforts on your strengths.
2. Create a clear link between the vision of the organization and the everyday production of the team. Define what success is for each person. Reward and celebrate small victories.
3. Develop your people into a team.
 - ▶ Help team members complement one another.
 - ▶ Make sure each team member understands the mission and how each contributes to it.

- ▶ Provide a way for the team to get feedback on its performance.
 - ▶ Set a tone that encourages growth and inspiration.
4. Prioritize the things that yield high return. Strive to have each person work in their strength zone at least 80% of the time.
 5. Be a change agent. Leverage shared vision, values, and attitudes when making a change. Keep communication open and honest.
 6. Never let your team lose sight of the importance of results.

Laws of Leadership at Level 3

- Law of Respect: People naturally follow leaders stronger than themselves.
- Law of Magnetism: Who you are is who you attract.
- Law of the Picture: People do what people see.
- Law of Victory: Leaders find a way for the team to win.
- Law of the Big Mo: Momentum is a leader's best friend.
- Law of Priorities: Leaders focus on results, not activity.
- Law of Sacrifice: A leader must give up non-essentials to go up.
- Law of Buy-In: People buy into the leader before they buy into the vision.

Beliefs That Help a Leader Move to Level 4

1. Production is not enough.
2. People are an organization's most appreciable asset.
3. Growing leaders is the most effective way to accomplish the vision.
4. People development is the greatest fulfillment of a leader.

Guide to Growing through Level 3

1. Be the team member you want on your team.
2. Translate personal productivity into leadership.
3. Understand each person's productivity niche.
4. Continually cast vision.
5. Build your team.
6. Use momentum to solve problems.
7. Determine how each team member affects momentum. Leverage the momentum makers and minimize the damage of the momentum breakers.
8. Practice the Pareto principle. Focus 80% of your time and effort on the tasks in the top 20% of importance.

Level 4: People Development

Upside of People Development

1. It sets you apart from most leaders.
2. It assures that the organization can sustain growth.
3. It empowers others to fulfill their leadership responsibilities.
4. It gives you more quality thinking time.
5. It provides great personal fulfillment.

Downside of People Development

You can fall into some traps in People Development.

<i>Trap</i>	<i>Reality</i>
Being selfish.	You need to focus 80% of your attention on helping others grow, learn, and achieve.
Giving in to your insecurities.	You need to let go of ego and control. Build trust with others.
Being shortsighted.	In the short-term, developing others takes much time and energy. Long-term, it pays dividends.
Lacking commitment.	It takes a tremendous amount of effort and sacrifice, but can transform organizations.

Best Behaviors on Level 4

1. Recruiting: Find the best people possible.
(chemistry, character, capacity, contribution)
2. Positioning: Placing people in the right position.
3. Modeling: Showing others how to lead.
4. Equipping: Helping others do their jobs well.
(apprentice model)
5. Developing: Teaching them to do life well.
(assess, challenge, support)
6. Empowering: Enabling people to succeed.
7. Measuring: Evaluating them to maximize their efforts.

Laws of Leadership at Level 4

- Law of Process: Leadership develops daily, not in a day.
- Law of Addition: Leaders add value by serving others.
- Law of the Inner Circle: A leader's potential is determined by those closest to him.
- Law of Empowerment: Only secure leaders give power to others.
- Law of Explosive Growth: Developing leader is the fastest way to grow an organization.

- Law of Buy-In: People buy into the leader before they buy into the vision.

Beliefs That Help a Leader Move to Level 5

1. The highest goal of leadership is to develop leaders. (Focus 80% of your attention on the best 20% of leaders that you have.)
2. To develop leaders, you must create a leadership culture. (champion, teach, practice, coach, and reward leadership)
3. Developing leaders is a life commitment.

Guide to Growing through Level 4

1. Intentionally keep growing yourself.
2. Decide that people are worth the effort.
3. Work through your insecurities.
4. Recruit the best people you can to develop.
5. Invest the time needed in those you select to develop.
6. Customize the development process for each leader you develop. (daily, measurable, things they value, aligned with their strengths, fit into their dream plan, shadow you, blend of people and task, energizing from you, access to you)

Level 5: The Pinnacle

Upside of The Pinnacle

1. It creates a level 5 organization that functions at an extraordinarily high level.
2. It creates a legacy within the organization.
3. It provides an extended platform for leading.
People seek them out for advice.

Downside of The Pinnacle

You can fall into some traps in The Pinnacle.

<i>Trap</i>	<i>Reality</i>
Thinking you've arrived.	You can never arrive. You can only strive to get better.
Believing your own press.	No leaders are above the laws of leadership.
Losing focus.	You must remain focused on your vision and purpose.

Best Behaviors on Level 5

1. Develop leaders who develop other leaders.
 - ▶ Desire to be succeeded, not needed.
 - ▶ Focus on developing people's strengths.
 - ▶ Give away power instead of hoarding it.
 - ▶ See potential leaders as they could be.
 - ▶ Mentor potential level 4 or 5 leaders.
2. Continually mentor potential level 5 leaders.
3. Create an inner circle to keep you grounded.
4. Do things that only level 5 leaders can do.
5. Plan for your succession.
6. Leave a positive legacy.

Laws of Leadership at Level 5

- Law of Respect: People naturally follow leaders stronger than themselves.
- Law of Intuition: Leaders evaluate everything with a leadership bias.
- Law of Timing: When to lead is as important as what to do and where to go.

- Law of Legacy: A leader's lasting value is measured by succession.
- Law of Explosive Growth: Developing leader is the fastest way to grow an organization.

Help Others Move Up to Levels 4 and 5

1. Identify and create the crucial leadership lessons they must learn.
2. Look for unexpected crucible moments that foster learning.
3. Use your own crucible moments to teach others. (ground breakers, ice breakers, cloud breakers, tie breakers, heart breakers, record breakers)
4. Expose them to other people and organizations the will impact them.

Guide to Being Your Best at Level 5

1. Remain humble and teachable.
2. Maintain your core focus. (sweet spot, core strength)
3. Create the right inner circle to keep you grounded.
4. Do what only you can do.
5. Create a supercharged leadership development environment.
6. Create room at the top.
7. Mentor your top leaders.
8. Plan your succession.
9. Plan your legacy.
10. Use your leadership success as a platform for something greater.

Portrait of a Level 5 Leader

