

IMAGE ONE
[The Mirror Effect]



IMAGE ONE
[The Mirror Effect]



The Mirror Effect

AS A LEADER, YOUR FOLLOWERS WILL BE A REFLECTION OF YOU. NOT ONLY WILL YOU ATTRACT OTHERS LIKE YOURSELF, BUT OVER TIME, THOSE WHO FOLLOW YOU WILL MIRROR BOTH YOUR NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS.

Since the beginning of time, humans have been preoccupied with their looks. Consequently, we've searched for ways to see our reflections and seek out available mirrors. The still water of a clear pool, in fact, was man's first mirror.

With the rise of the Bronze Age, in about 3,500 B.C., polished metal had become the favored material among Sumerians in Mesopotamia, as well as Egyptians and Hebrews. By 328 B.C., the Greeks had established a school for mirror craftsmanship, and by the rise of the Roman Empire, manufacturing mirrors had become a flourishing business. Eventually, gold mirrors were the craze. In fact, head servants would even demand personalized gold mirrors to be allotted in place of their wages!

The first glass mirrors allowed for a far more precise reflection. They debuted in Venice, Italy, in 1300, under the hands of Venetian glass blowers. By 1687, Frenchman Bernard Perrot had patented a method for rolling out smooth, undistorted sheets of glass, resulting in the hand-held and full-length mirrors we know today. At last, man had fashioned an instrument that offered a perfect reflection of himself. Mirrors remain an important part of most any dorm, bath, or bedroom in modern day culture.

The mirror reminds us of a helpful leadership principle. Leaders, in fact, have their own unique mirror—their followers. I call this The Mirror Effect. Within 18 to 24 months, leaders will find that they cannot blame someone else for the atmosphere and attitude of the organization. They are the reason for that atmosphere. By

For years, I worked with college students in San Diego and oversaw our intern program. We had dozens of interns serving, and at the end of every year, it became somewhat predictable for me to hear people say:

"Hey, Tim, your intern sounds just like you."

"I could see you in them."

"I could tell they have been around you, Tim."

My explanation is simple. It's the mirror effect. While each intern retained their own personality, they couldn't help but reflect the style, values and even flaws of their leader. Dr. John Maxwell further illustrates this with the Law of Magnetism: Leaders attract who they "are," not who they "want." In other words, *like attracts like*. But there's another law at work here beyond Magnetism. Call it the Law of Emulation. Leaders must model the life they want their followers to live because people will emulate them. In a nutshell, the top rule of management is: people do what people see.

Over the years, I've enjoyed asking this question to audiences at leadership conferences on university campuses, or with corporations: What virtues do you wish your people possessed? On a pad of paper, I jot down the responses: "I wish they were more committed...had a better attitude...possessed more passion...were more friendly..." and the list goes on. Then I take the list and ask, "Do you have these qualities? Do you model these virtues?"

People do what people see. They are mirrors.

The Mirror Effect underscores a principle that leaders must never forget—the power of example. You can talk all you want about behaviors and expectations for your organization, but ultimately, the life you model will be the lecture that gets through. Dr. Albert Schweitzer once said, "Example is not the most important thing about leadership. It is the only thing." Ask any manager. Ask any teacher. In fact, ask any parent. Kids do what kids see.

Recently, I was in the home of a neighbor who was teaching his son the virtue of honesty and integrity. He was so proud of their discussions over the past month. My friend was convinced he was getting through. As we were talking, however, the phone rang. As his son ran to grab it, my neighbor yelled, "If it's for me, tell them I'm not here!"

Hmmm. Now what do you suppose that young boy concludes about honesty? "Dad's lectures say we should be honest at all times, but I guess it's just talk. When honesty becomes inconvenient, we don't have to actually practice it." Chances are, this boy will grow up believing honesty is important to talk about, but when it becomes inconvenient, who cares?

Paying the Piper is an old black and white movie about a father's challenges in raising his teenage daughter. In one of the scenes, the girl asks permission to attend the high school dance with an older boy.

Reluctantly, the dad allows her to go, though he remains protective. He doesn't want anything in the "real world" to harm his little girl. Waiting up for her on the night of the dance, the father is faced with his worst nightmare when the police show up at his front door. They inform him that his daughter and her date had been drinking and carelessly drove off of a bridge. Both died instantly.

The father is in anguish. "How could any restaurant, bar, or liquor store sell alcohol to a minor?" He determines to find the culprit, and he spends endless time and money investigating the crime, but to no avail. He failed in his search. In one final scene, he slumps in his living room chair. He is weary. He decides a drink would help his tired nerves at this point. But opening his liquor cabinet, he's stunned to find his bottle missing, replaced by a note that said, "Dear Dad, I know you like your Scotch to help you celebrate. I thought you wouldn't mind sharing it with me."

People do what people see—at home, at work, at school, wherever there is a leader. This explains why the followers of Martin Luther King Jr. acted so differently from the followers of Malcolm X. It explains why the Nazi regime, under Adolf Hitler, was so violent, and why the followers of Mahatma Gandhi were so peaceful. Just look at the leader. It's the mirror effect.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Leaders create the atmosphere and attitudes of their organizations. By design or default, they set the tone for their entire team. Why do you think example is more powerful than mere words?

As leaders, we must realize the "mirror effect" is constantly at work. Think of a leader that you know and respect. List several ways that the mirror effect is always at work in his or her life.

SELF ASSESSMENT

Take an honest look at your own life. More than likely, there are aspects that involve following people as well as leading people. Consider these questions and how the mirror effect might be at work in each one:

1. Who am I mirroring?

2. Who might be mirroring or reflecting me?

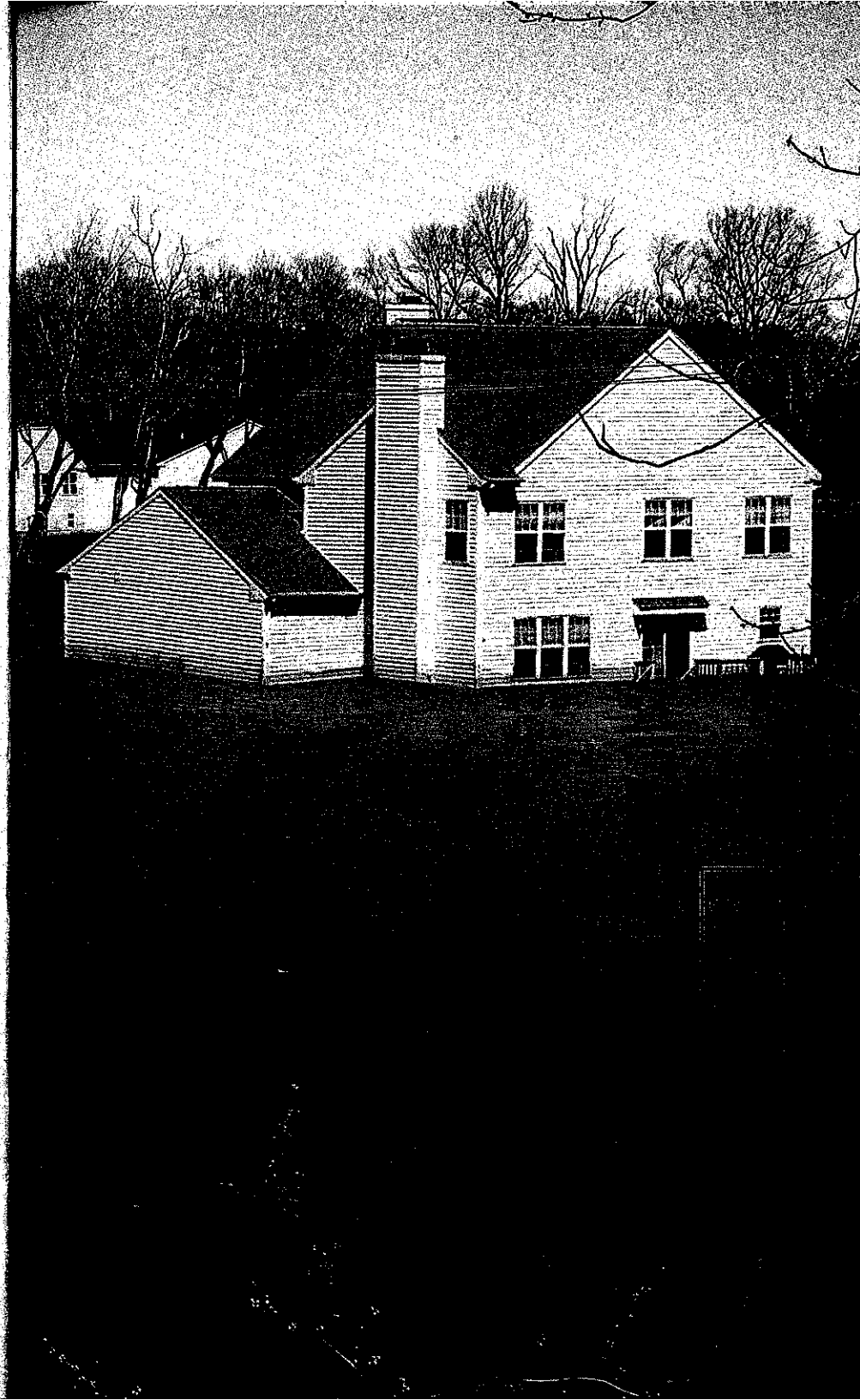
3. What positive qualities do I possess? How might others be emulating these qualities?

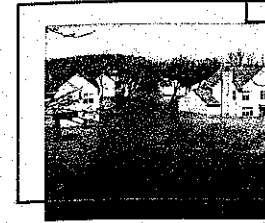
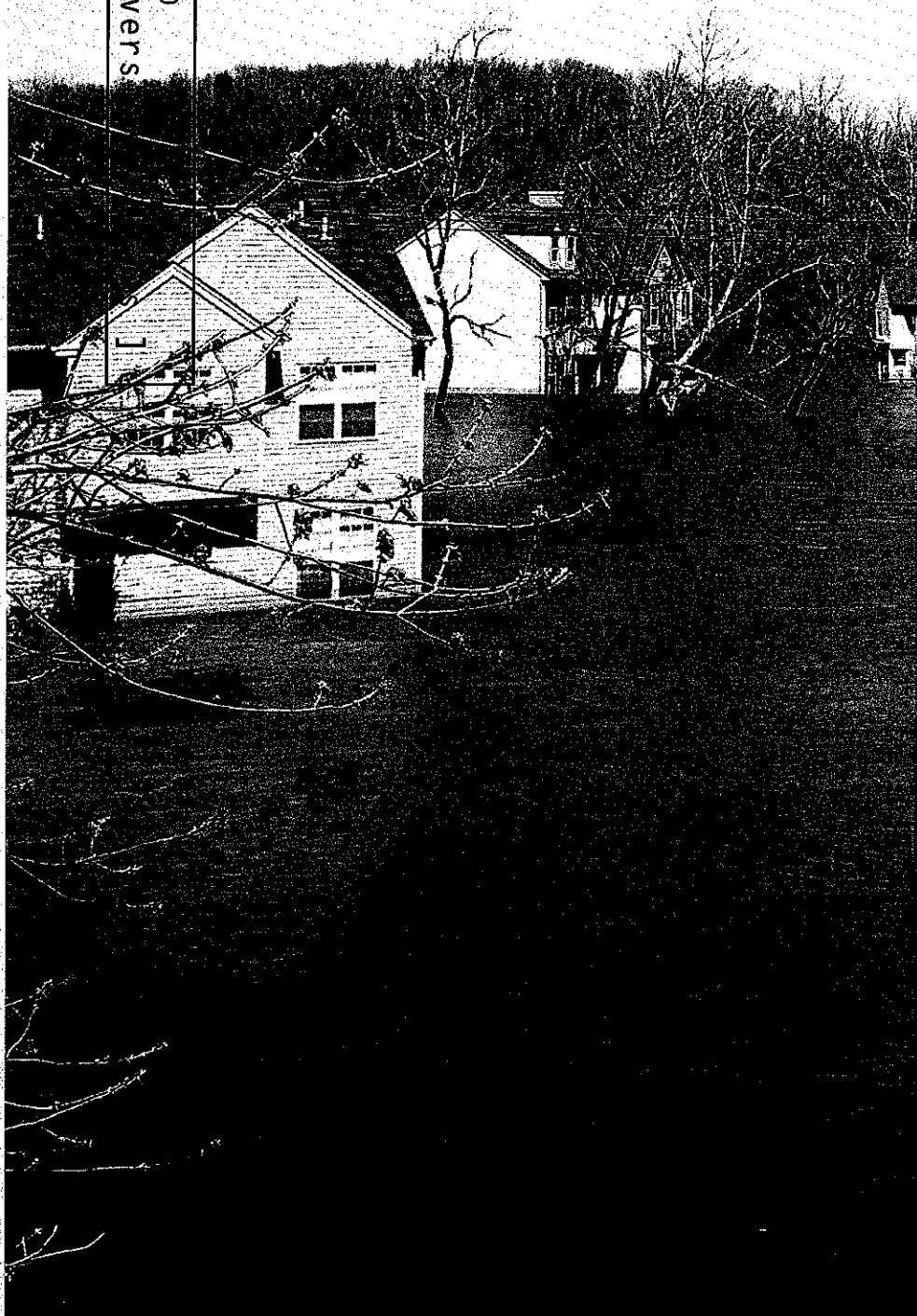
4. What negative qualities do I possess? How might others be emulating these qualities?

EXERCISE

Take some time to "people watch." This week, observe different groups of people and how the mirror effect is at work. What similarities, or differences, can you pinpoint among the people? Does anyone conspicuously stand out as a leader? Discuss why.

As a leader, do you wish your team possessed different attitudes or virtues? What might this say about you?





Rivers and Floods

FLOODS AND RIVERS ARE BOTH BODIES OF WATER. FLOODS DAMAGE. RIVERS ARE USEFUL IN MANY WAYS. THE DIFFERENCE? FOCUS. LEADERS MUST CHANNEL PEOPLE, TIME AND MONEY TOWARD ONE FOCUSED VISION.

I have a picture indelibly etched in my memory. When I was a kid, I remember a horrifying flood sweeping through a town not far from where we lived. I watched the TV intently as reporters showed the expanding body of murky water run through streets, over yards and into houses, restaurants and stores. The rushing water seemed to demolish everything in its path. In my mind, I can still see people standing on the tops of their cars weeping, as they watched their homes collapse and float away—piece by piece.

What started as a simple rainstorm ended up filling the nearby rivers and eventually flowing unmercifully into neighborhoods and strip malls. I remember thinking: How can such a simple thing as water do such damage? Some of my friends took a while to recover from the flood. One of them, in fact, wanted nothing to do with water for over a year. For him, a large body of water without some boundary was a frightening thing.

This is a picture of an important leadership principle. Many organizations begin very focused, like a river. The leaders possess an idea they want to implement. Soon, however, in their zeal to grow, they begin expanding far beyond the boundaries of their initial vision. If they are good at making widgets, they reason, why not make other products as well? Before long, in the name of meeting needs, generating revenue, or just plain growth—they become a flood instead of a river. They lose all focus and sprawl out in every direction. Like a flood, they end up damaging things. Floods can be shallow, unrestrained, muddy and harmful.

Far too many organizations become floods. Take IBM for instance. In the beginning, when IBM focused on mainframe computers, the company made a ton of money. By the 1980s, however, IBM expanded their product line and barely broke even. In 1991, they were making more products than ever, yet, the company wound up losing \$2.8 billion. That's almost \$8 million a day!

It's interesting. This rule of leadership is counter intuitive. It works the opposite of what we might think. It seems logical that enlarging product lines would always mean greater profit. It's actually the other way around. Staying focused on your central vision and strength is the key to growth. The airline industry is a good example. People Express launched as an airline that focused on no frills, low cost flights. At the first taste of success, they decided to expand beyond that vision. They began to provide first class seats, food, etc. Their profits dropped. In fact, they went out of business.

In contrast, Southwest Airlines entered the industry with a clear, focused vision, similar to People Express. Yet, they stuck to their strengths, and for years they've been a rare, profitable company in the airline business. Southwest Airlines refused to diversify; they remained a river. Rivers are much more narrow than floods. They move in one direction. They are a source for both electricity and transportation. Why? Vision and focus. Leaders must own a focused vision, or the organization will spill out in too many directions. If the leader isn't focused, the team will chase after every new idea. They will fall prey to every vendor wanting to capitalize on the success. Clear and focused vision harnesses energy. Just watch your team for a while. People lose energy when their direction in life is fuzzy. But they get energized when they catch a clear vision.

Just over fifty years ago, Walt Disney gathered his inner-circle to share his idea of building "Disneyland." It would be known as the "happiest place on earth." Walt's vision was clear and focused. As his team began to get excited about the vision, however, one of the members asked, "Who are you gonna get to build it?" Confidently, Walt responded, "I know exactly who I want to build it. Find me the man who helped put the U.S. Navy back in the Pacific after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. I figure he can do it."

It didn't take long for Walt's team to identify this man. His name was Joe Fowler. Admiral Joe Fowler. Retired Admiral Joe Fowler. When Disney showed up at Fowler's door and challenged him to build a theme park, Joe laughed. "You don't understand. I'm retired. I'm through." Disney quickly realized this guy was going to require some work. Placing pictures on the wall, Walt began to storyboard. Describing in great detail the feel, look, smell, sound and even taste of the park—Joe bought in. He stepped out of retirement and oversaw Disneyland's construction.

Twenty years later, the idea of Disney World was proposed—and can you guess who was hired to supervise the project? Joe Fowler. This time he was 77 years old. When the Disney team approached him a second time, he sighed again, "You don't understand. I'm retired. I'm through." But as pictures were posted and the vision was cast for their biggest project yet, Joe couldn't help but buy in. He ditched retirement again and oversaw the building of Disney World.

The story goes on. Ten years later, EPCOT was built in Orlando. Disney once again looked to Joe Fowler to lead the construction. He was now 87 years old.

Joe repeated his objection: "You don't understand. I'm retired. I'm through." But Disney knew Joe was the man. His team communicated the clear, focused vision again. Joe lit up, stepped out of retirement and oversaw the project.

What a picture of the energy that accompanies clear vision. Joe's favorite phrase, "I'm retired. I'm through," was changed to, "You don't have to die 'til you want to." Hmmm. I often wonder how much energy remains bottled up in people because they never learn to focus, or they just plain fail to tap into a clear vision.

Here is the irony of this principle. My friend Mike Kendrick explained it with the following phrase: What you focus on expands. Read that sentence again. Now think about it. If I tell you to focus on finding Toyota Camrys on the road, you will notice these cars everywhere. Why? Because what you focus on expands. So, the goal of a leader is to focus, not expand. Growth is a product of focus. Clarify the vision. Focus your people, time, energy and resources. Remember this: just because you CAN do something doesn't mean you SHOULD. Intensify. Don't diversify.

In order to accomplish this focus, it's important to zero in on a handful of words. In fact, maybe just one word (or concept) that becomes your own. It describes your identity and vision. Some of the best selling products on the market "own" such words. Crest toothpaste owns the word "cavities." FedEx owns the word "overnight." Volvo owns the words "automobile safety." As they focus their energies on a single concept, these companies go deeper and expand in one area. They are like a river, moving in one direction. And being a river is about clear vision and a sharp focus.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Many organizations begin very focused, like a river, but as they expand they lose their initial vision and become a flood. Using the examples that were given in this chapter, what are some of the benefits of a clear, focused vision?

Try to think of organizations—either historical or current—who lost their vision. List them below with a brief explanation of how you believe they lost their vision. What was the end result?

SELF ASSESSMENT

The water in a river represents the people, time, energy and resources invested in your organization. So if you're going to be a river, you've got to channel your water well. Consider these questions.

1. How many activities are you trying to perform? How about your organization?

2. How thin have you spread yourself? Are you more like a flood or a river?

3. What should you cut out of your life or trim back in order to be more productive?

Here's the challenge. Ask yourself: What word do we own? Ask outsiders what word comes to mind when they think of your organization?

EXERCISE

Consider an organization you're involved with and discuss within your team the "word" that most clearly describes your vision. What's your focus? Do you think your customers would agree?

Just for fun, clump your group together and tie a rope around them. Lead the group outside and see if they can stay together. Do they listen to you? Does each person try to go their own direction, or do they focus on working together?

IMAGE THREE
[The Paul Revere Principle]





The Paul Revere Principle

PAUL REVERE AND WILLIAM DAWES BOTH MADE A MIDNIGHT RIDE, BUT ONLY ONE WAS ABLE TO CONNECT WITH AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE. THE TEST OF A LEADER'S CREDIBILITY LIES IN HIS OR HER ABILITY TO MOBILIZE OTHERS.

Just outside of Boston on April 18th, 1775, a young stable boy overheard two British soldiers talking. They hinted of an attack on the colonists in New England, and they said something about the townsmen having "hell to pay" tomorrow. The young boy ran to inform a silversmith by the name of Paul Revere. After careful thought, Revere determined to mobilize the area against the attack the British were planning. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Paul Revere made his famous "midnight ride," which actually began about 10:00 p.m. that night. He raced on horseback through the towns and villages surrounding Boston, challenging locals to get up and defend their country! By the next morning, as the Redcoats secretly made their way inland, they were met in Lexington by a huge group of volunteers, American patriots. They were shocked, to say the least. The British were unprepared and outdone that morning—and the Revolutionary War was underway.

An interesting bit of trivia from this story is that Paul Revere wasn't the only Patriot to make a midnight ride. A tanner by the name of William Dawes also took the ride. He rode on a similar horse, covered a similar amount of territory and carried an identical message, but Dawes had difficulty getting anyone to act. In fact, he was so poor at mobilizing folks, historians assumed for years Dawes must have traveled to pro-British towns. But, alas, he hadn't. He simply lacked the capability to mobilize people, even for a cause they agreed with.

This contrast illustrates another important leadership principle. I call it "The Paul Revere Principle." When you boil down the essence of leadership to its bare minimum, it's about mobilizing others to act. Paul Revere was able to connect with and influence townspeople to get up and respond. William Dawes, on the other hand, couldn't get a man to turn over in bed!

(Well—that may be a bit of an exaggeration.) For some reason, though, Dawes lacked the credibility, communication skills, aptitude, trust and respect to move people toward taking a risk.

So what is it that enables a leader to motivate people to action? There are many answers to that question, but let me suggest a few:

1. INSIGHT – PEOPLE LISTEN TO YOU BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU KNOW.

Example: Ben Franklin. Ben influenced people through his knowledge, wisdom and insight.

2. RELATIONSHIPS – PEOPLE LISTEN BECAUSE OF WHO YOU KNOW.

Example: Oprah Winfrey. Although she has several influential qualities, she is very well connected and both colleagues and TV viewers like her.

3. SACRIFICE – PEOPLE LISTEN BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU'VE SUFFERED.

Example: Mother Teresa. Harvard grads and U.S. presidents listened because of her sacrificial life.

4. ABILITIES – PEOPLE LISTEN BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU ARE ABLE TO DO.

Example: Michael Jordan. His credibility came from his unmatched skills on the basketball court.

5. EXPERIENCE – PEOPLE LISTEN BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU'VE ACHIEVED.

Example: Colin Powell or Norman Schwarzkopf. Their credibility came from their military success.

6. INTUITION – PEOPLE LISTEN BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU SENSE.

Example: Thomas Edison or Steve Jobs. They saw a new world coming before the rest of us did.

7. CHARACTER – PEOPLE LISTEN BECAUSE OF YOUR INTEGRITY.

Example: Billy Graham. His sermons aren't flashy, but he's a man of his word. He walks the talk.

8. HUMILITY – PEOPLE LISTEN BECAUSE OF YOUR HEART.

Example: Dan Cathy. The president of Chick-fil-A by serving his employees and customers.

9. RELEVANCE – PEOPLE LISTEN BECAUSE YOU IDENTIFY WITH THEIR NEEDS.

Example: Martin Luther King, Jr. He identified with common folks; he marched and bled with them.

10. CONVICTIONS – PEOPLE LISTEN BECAUSE OF YOUR PASSION.

Example: Winston Churchill. His passion and conviction stirred the Allies to fight until they won.

Let me ask you a question: Why do people listen to you? What reasons do you give them to follow you? Good leaders find a way to connect with people. They earn their right to be followed. They build bridges of relationship that can bear the weight of truth.

Since 1983, I have been mentored by and worked with Dr. John Maxwell. He told me a great story that I think really illustrates this principle. Early in his career, he became the new senior minister at a church, and because he was replacing the founding minister, Orval Butcher, John found a number of charter members who loved "the old" and despised "the new." He had replaced their hero. One such man was Harry Mitchell. Harry wouldn't have anything to do with John. He didn't respond to John's attempts to befriend him and would gripe about any change that John made. Finally, he asked Harry's wife what the problem was. She confided in him that Harry loved his former leader and since John replaced this leader, Harry couldn't like him. It was at this point John took action. He called Harry and asked if they could meet, to which Harry reluctantly agreed. After some small talk, John leaned forward and said, "I have a question for you, Harry. Would you mind taking a minute and telling me about Reverend Butcher?" Harry lit up like a light. Immediately, he began telling stories about how Reverend Butcher had married and buried family and friends, and how he'd helped him in many tough times. He went on for several minutes. When Harry finished, John leaned forward and responded, "Harry, I have to tell you—I agree. Reverend Butcher was, and is, a great leader. And I think you should continue loving him just the way you do today. He deserves all that love." This was not only liberating for Harry, but it was disarming, too. John paused and continued, "Now, I have another question for you. After you love Reverend Butcher with all that love, if there's any love left over, could I have it?"

Harry's heart began to break. He knew exactly what was happening. His new leader would let him go on with his emotional tie to his former leader and was simply asking for "the leftovers." Harry was speechless. Both of the men just sat there and wept. Harry eventually got up and for the first time, initiated a hug with his new leader. It was a breakthrough. Following that day, I got to watch Harry support John and connect with him like never before. In fact, Harry would often linger on Sunday mornings and once everyone was gone, he'd sneak up on Dr. Maxwell and give him a huge bear hug, whispering, "This is the love I got left over."

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Everyone must earn the right to be followed. This chapter opened with the example of Paul Revere's ability to connect with and influence the townspeople to action. After his story, I list ten reasons that enable leaders to motivate their people to action. Reflect on why people follow you. Which reasons are true about your influence with people? Why do people follow you?

As leaders, the question of influence isn't about the "what," but the "how." The way we treat our team members is an important piece of the puzzle in motivating them to action. How might this consideration affect your influence?

SELF ASSESSMENT

Earlier, I told the story of how John Maxwell connected with Harry Mitchell. I believe John practiced four roles in that relationship. Evaluate yourself on these roles. Why did you score yourself this way?

A Host: Do you initiate contact with people so they are comfortable?
Remember: You're a host, not a guest.

< POOR 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 EXCELLENT >

A Doctor: Do you poke and prod with questions, so the focus is on them and not on you?

< POOR 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 EXCELLENT >

A Counselor: Do you actively listen after posing a question, allowing the person to see your desire to understand, and not just speak?

< POOR 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 EXCELLENT >

A Tour Guide: Do you earn the right to lead people to a destination that is possibly unreachable without you?

< POOR 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 EXCELLENT >

EXERCISE

Prepare a survey and with a group, take it to a park, mall, or some public setting. How many people can you get to take your survey? Do different people in your group get different responses? Did one person have unusual success, or another more difficulty? Why might some be able to motivate others easily, while others struggle? Talk about what happened with your group.

IMAGE FOUR
[Bit Market]



Bit Market

A DRILL COMPANY LEARNED: THERE'S NO MARKET FOR DRILL BITS—ONLY HOLES. GOOD LEADERS DON'T CONFUSE METHODS WITH THEIR MISSION. THEY SELL RESULTS, NOT PROGRAMS. THEY KEEP THEIR EYES ON THE BIG PICTURE.

A drill company hired a new president to lead them. They were excited about the future and wanted the president to see how much influence they already had in the marketplace. On his first day, department managers gave speeches on their company's control over the bit market. Selling 60 percent of all drill bits purchased in America, they couldn't help but be proud of their status.

That afternoon, the president stood up and responded. After thanking them for their speeches, he confronted them with a harsh reality. "While I'm excited about our drill bit sales, we must remember one fact: there is no market for drill bits." He paused and smiled. "The market is for holes." Those employees discovered an important principle that day. This company had focused so intently on their product—their method for making a hole—they forgot it was only the means to an end. People buy drill bits to make a hole. And the moment someone comes up with a better way to make a hole, the drill bit becomes obsolete.

Effective leaders help their team see the big picture perspective. They never lose sight of the intended result. Because of this, they are open to new ideas, methods and innovations toward reaching their goal. For instance, the next best way to make a hole in a piece of wood might be a laser gun, requiring no drill bits at all. This new method would require a whole new skill set, technology, and even new team members! Hmmm—it's enough to humble any leader. Bottom line: our world changes too fast to ever "marry a method."

One of the easiest traps that entangle leaders is falling in love with a method or program. When that happens, leaders become blinded to new ways of reaching their goal. Sometimes, our egos cloud our thinking. Someone once said that if the railroad industry had realized they were really in the transportation business, they would have been the first people in the airline industry. Take a minute to reflect. How many organizations have failed because they focused on their "drill bit?"

Hundreds of companies across America who once led their industries have either fallen behind or have fallen completely out of business. Why? They saw only their drill bit—and forgot the hole.

Companies that see the big picture, on the other hand, are open to change and stay relevant. For example, H&R Block began years ago because they wanted to help people with their finances. The company started as a bookkeeping service for small corporations who couldn't afford a full-time bookkeeper. In order to attract business, they offered a free tax service and within a short time, they made a huge discovery. Customers would sign up for their bookkeeping service, just to get their taxes handled. In other words, H&R Block recognized what their customers really wanted and adjusted their methods to meet that need. Today, H&R Block is known as a tax service. In fact, they handle the tax forms of more Americans than any other company in their industry.

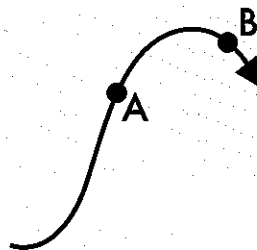
Take the game of football. Up until 1906, college football was a low-scoring, slow running game. That year, the forward pass was legalized. It represented a whole new way to move the ball downfield. That season, however, everyone ignored this new rule and continued to focus on what they already knew how to do. That is, everyone except for St. Louis University. They saw the potential of this change and created a whole new offense. The result? That season St. Louis outscored their opponents 402 to 11.

THE SIGMOID CURVE

So what allows a leader to be open to new ideas? What enables leaders to change when they need to? And just how does positive change take place in an organization today? The answer comes from a little diagram created by British educator, Charles Handy. It is called, The Sigmoid Curve. In several diagrams, Handy communicates how effective organizations experience growth and change.

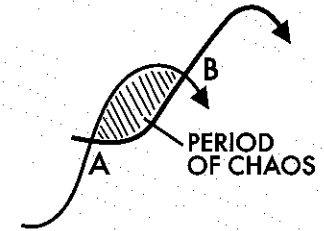
HOW GROWTH HAPPENS

Notice the following diagram. It shows how a new organization grows. At first, the curve goes down, as time, money and people are invested. Eventually, they begin to grow, and the team enjoys success and even mastery of what they do. Over time, though, if they continue doing what they've always done, they will plateau. And if they refuse to change, the organization will experience decline. Sales, or interest, will drop. It's at this point most leaders make a change—Point B. The problem is, it's a little late. Momentum is gone and they're back in first gear. In other words, it feels like raising the dead to begin again.



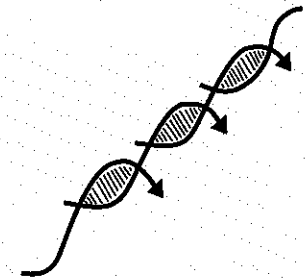
CHANGING BEFORE YOU HAVE TO

Charles Handy says a good leader will make the change much earlier, or at Point A. But if leaders do so, they will incur the wrath of many on their team. Why? Because nobody else sees the need for change. Everything seems fine. So, for a time, the leader will appear wrong. From the time he makes the change (Point A), to the time everyone recognizes the wisdom behind his decision (Point B), the organization experiences a "Period of Chaos." The team feels like it's in a state of flux, and no one knows what they are doing.



CHAOS IS OUR CONSTANT COMPANION

The good news is—this period ends well. Eventually, the team sees that the leader made an early move to stay on top of the game. Consequently, the leader earns the team's trust. The more challenging news is that the organization must begin a new Sigmoid Curve. They can enjoy their new idea for a season, but must stay open for the next change. In fact, good leaders are continually improving their organizations and making positive changes. This means that chaos might just be a constant companion for those team members. But this is good! Everyone is forced to keep their eyes on the mission, not the method.



Effective leaders welcome change. They sell holes (goals) to their stakeholders, not drill bits (programs). In fact, they're constantly looking for new ways to make holes. They keep their eyes on the dream, not the drill bit. Finally, any "one" method doesn't bind them. And the reason is simple. Good leaders pursue results.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Effective leaders help their team see the big picture. Because they never lose sight of the intended result, successful leaders are open to new ideas to reach their goal. As you reflect on this *Habitude*, what "hole" are you trying to drill...at work? In your family? At school?

Choose one of the above areas. What is one new way to drill this hole? In other words, what new idea might more effectively reach your goal in that area?

Sometimes leaders focus on "pet" issues, while forgetting the bigger picture. What can you do to keep from falling into this same trap? What prevents you from trying new ideas?

SELF ASSESSMENT

As leaders, we tend to have "pet programs," or favorite ideas. These can be "drill bits" that blind us from more effective ways of reaching our goal—better ways to drill our hole. Evaluate what hinders you:

1. MY PRIDE & EGO:
If I create a program, it's difficult for me to see the value of other ideas: Yes / No
2. MY PERSPECTIVE:
It is often difficult for me to see an issue from more than one angle: Yes / No
3. MY INSECURITIES:
I can get defensive, or competitive, if I'm committed to an idea: Yes / No

EXERCISE

Bring a bag of oddly shaped objects, tools or utensils to a team meeting. Have each team member pick one and imagine several new uses for the item. See the objects with new eyes. Brainstorm what they could do.

Next, think about new ways to achieve your goals as a team. Imagine new ways to drill a hole. List one way you could improve.

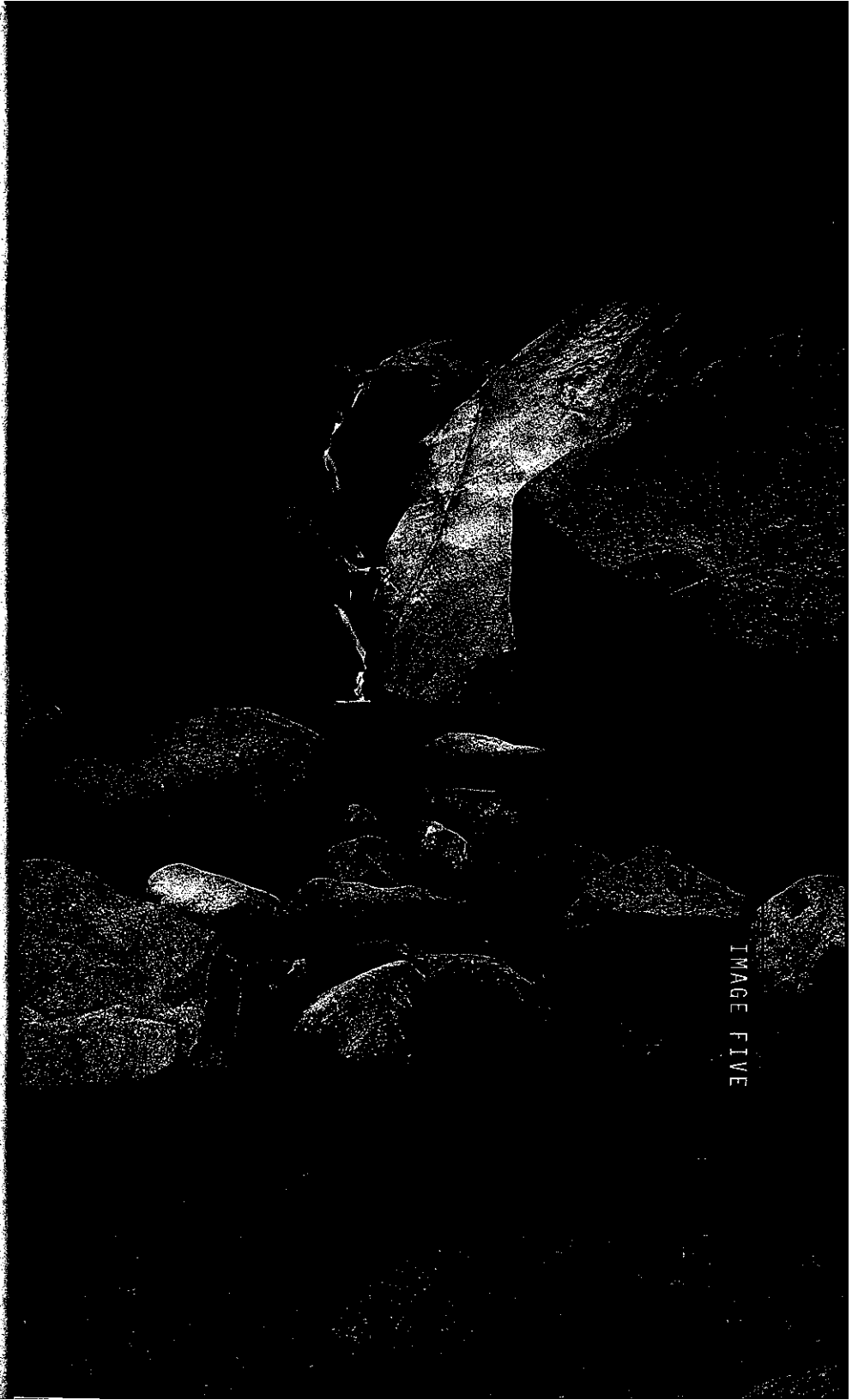


IMAGE FIVE



Big Rocks First

ROCKS ARE LIKE PRIORITIES. ONLY SO MANY ROCKS CAN FIT IN A JAR. ONLY SO MANY ACTIVITIES CAN FIT IN A WEEK. THE ISSUE ISN'T PRIORITIZING YOUR SCHEDULE, BUT SCHEDULING YOUR PRIORITIES. PUT IN THE BIG ROCKS FIRST.

A while back, I attended a seminar on time management. One morning, our speaker decided to give us a pop quiz. He pulled out a wide-mouth mason jar and set it on the table in front of him. Then he brought out several rocks—all shapes and sizes—and placed them arbitrarily into the jar. When no more rocks could fit, we noticed that much of his pile never made it into the jar. It was full. Afterward, he held it up and said, "This jar represents your typical week. The rocks represent the various activities in your week. When placed in randomly, everything simply won't fit in." Looking deep into our eyes he said, "Have you found this to be true?" Each of us nodded in agreement.

What he did next was fascinating. The speaker emptied out the jar he had filled, and began re-filling it with just the big rocks. He informed us that these rocks represented the "big priorities" in life: family, career, health, our studies, etc. Once the jar looked full, the man asked, "Is the jar full?" He received a unanimous, "Yes." "Really?" he asked. He then put the medium sized rocks in, which were just small enough to fit between the crevices of the big ones. Next, he reached under the table for a bucket of gravel. While shaking the jar, he dumped in the gravel, filling all the gaps. "Now is the jar full?" he asked. The speaker then pulled out a bucket of sand and began dumping it into the jar. It filled all remaining spaces between the rocks and the gravel. Finally, he grabbed a pitcher of water and poured it into the jar, until the jar was filled to the brim. "What's the principle of this illustration?" he asked the audience. "Cramming as much into one week as you possibly can!" was one response. "No," answered the speaker. "The point is, big rocks must go in first. When you put them in first, you'll find there's generally room for the smaller ones."

The same thing is true about day-to-day living. We fill our lives first with trivial things, only to find we don't have room for the most important things in life. This week, you probably have a full plate. As a student, you have tests, assignments, classes, e-mails and papers. As an employee, you have a job requiring even more things like meetings, calls and follow-ups. Or perhaps you're pulling double-duty, as both a student and an employee! How do you go about completing all of this? Some have no problem checking things off their to-do list, but others have difficulty just getting started! The real issue for either, though, falls in deciding where to start on your list.

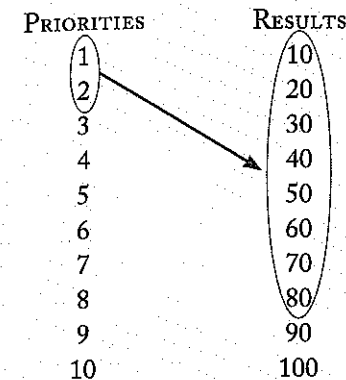
When we have a to-do list, our human tendency is to start with the easier tasks. In fact, most people will do fun things, loud things, quick things, or easy things first. Usually, however, these are the less important tasks long-term—they're the small rocks. We must learn to do first things first. Another term for this Big Rock concept is the "Pareto Principle."

THE PARETO PRINCIPLE

Vilfredo Pareto was an Italian economist who made a discovery about a hundred years ago. He suggested that a principle is at work that applies to money, people and time. Some call it the 80/20 Principle. This principle teaches us about handling priorities. Here it is in a nutshell:

WHEN YOU PRACTICE THE RIGHT PRIORITIES, 20 PERCENT OF YOUR EFFORT GETS YOU 80 PERCENT OF YOUR DESIRED RESULTS.

For example, on a typical list of ten "to-do" items, two are often more significant in relation to the rest. In other words, 20 percent of the items are more productive than the other 80 percent. So why do we start with the less-important ones? Typically, it's because we can quickly cross them off our list and say, "Look at all the work I've done! See? I only have three things left to do!" The problem is, this plan doesn't necessarily translate into results. Activity does not equal accomplishment. The Pareto Principle teaches that focusing our attention on the most important activities, gains the highest return for our efforts. By focusing on the most important 20 percent, we accomplish 80 percent of our desired results. That means tackling items one and two on your list, especially if you can't fit them all in. First things first, not easy things first. Check out the diagram on the next page.



EXAMPLES OF THE 80/20 PRINCIPLE:

TIME—20 percent of your time produces 80 percent of the results.

WORK—20 percent of the people do 80 percent of the work.

GROWTH—20 percent of the programs furnish 80 percent of the growth.

FINANCES—20 percent of the people donate 80 percent of the money to charities.

LEADERSHIP—20 percent of the people make 80 percent of the decisions.

READING—20 percent of the book provides 80 percent of the helpful content.

LECTURES—20 percent of the class lecture offers 80 percent of the impact.

PICNICS—20 percent of the people eat 80 percent of the food. (Just kidding!)

Have you ever wished you had 30 hours in a day instead of 24? It sounds so nice, doesn't it? Six extra hours! We could get so much more done—spend more time with family, schedule more appointments, even catch up on sleep! But, do you really think adding more hours would solve our problems? Sure, we might cross off another "to-do," but we would likely add another at the same time! Putting more time in our day is not the solution to producing results. Our problem is, we don't handle our present schedules well. We get distracted, and even paralyzed, when so many items are screaming for our attention.

A lion tamer was once asked which "weapon" he would sacrifice first—his whip or his stool? He chose to keep the stool. This was puzzling until he explained why. The stool actually paralyzes the lion. When it is waved in front of him, the beast is unable to focus. The four separate legs create four separate focal points. The lion doesn't know which leg to focus on and because he can't decide, he can't attack. He's immobilized. Hmmm. Sound familiar?

The bottom line is simple. It's not about prioritizing our schedule—but rather, scheduling our priorities. We must choose the “big rocks” and place them first on our calendar.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Our calendars reveal the hard evidence concerning the issue of scheduling priorities. What determines the items that fill your daily calendar? Why?

Do you tend to react more to the urgency of needs, or to the importance of needs? We live in constant tension between the urgent and the important. Are you allowing the urgent things to crowd out the important? Are your days filled by priorities, or by the relentless requests of others? How can you strike a balance between the urgent and the truly important?

SELF ASSESSMENT

Your top priorities should revolve around the following three questions:

1. What is *required* of you? (What is a “must do”; what is absolutely necessary?)

2. What gives you the greatest *result*? (What will be the most productive?)

3. What is most *rewarding*? (What is most fulfilling when you do it?)

Pay attention to activities that show up in your answers. Those are your big rocks.

EXERCISE

On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions based on the 80/20 Principle. Look for places where your answers overlap. The answers that overlap will help you find your top 20 percent priorities as a leader.

1. Who defines the top 20 percent of influencers in whom you're investing your life?
2. What activities result in the greatest amount of results for your organization or team?
3. Who are the potential leaders you should train or equip for leadership?
4. When you lead, what gives you the deepest sense of fulfillment?
5. List other priorities you should pursue, based on your organization's mission.

The tragic story of Eastern Airline's 1972 crash into the Florida Everglades is a classic case of misplaced priorities. The now famous Flight 401 was bound from New York to Miami, with a full load of holiday passengers. As the plane approached the Miami airport, the pilot pushed the landing gear light. It didn't come on. Either the bulb was faulty, or the landing gear had not lowered. Over the next few minutes, as the plane circled the airport, everyone in the cockpit became preoccupied with the unlit bulb. Somehow, the plane's auto-pilot system disengaged and the plane began to descend, but due to the bulb distraction, no one noticed the lost altitude. Nor did the crew hear alarms warning of the plane's descent. Sadly, these highly paid pilots forgot the bigger picture and instead, got caught up in the seventy-five cent light bulb. They forgot the big rocks.

IMAGE SIX
[Duck Hunting]

IMAGE SIX
[Duck Hunting]



Duck Hunting

IN DUCK HUNTING, YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET ALL THE DUCKS TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL HUNT. LIKEWISE, LEADERS DON'T EVALUATE SUCCESS BY GETTING EVERYONE ON BOARD. THEY CELEBRATE AND INVEST IN THOSE WHO RESPOND.

I want you to imagine something. Pretend you have a friend who just returned from a hunting trip. It was his very first duck hunt. He was excited when he left for the trip, knowing how much fun others had bagging ducks on this big lake. He bought all the gear and was ready for the time of his life. As he walked through the door upon returning home, you smile and ask, "Well—how was the hunt?"

He doesn't smile back. Something has obviously gone wrong. "The day was terrible," he muses, proceeding to slump in a chair and pout. Assuming he didn't get any ducks at all, you ask if he missed every shot he took. "Oh no—I actually got twelve ducks. See, here they are," he said, immediately producing a bag of twelve beautiful ducks. Now, you're just plain confused. When you bring up his apparent success with these twelve, he looks up and responds, "Well, sure, I got twelve ducks. But...hundreds of them got away!"

While this imaginary story seems far-fetched, there is a point to it. It's obvious to anyone who has spent the day crouching in a duck blind, that you don't have to get all the ducks to have a good hunt. Unlike the elk hunter, who reminisces about the elk he missed, a returning duck hunter focuses on what he got. Because let's face it, with just one gun and hundreds of ducks flying away, you're bound to miss plenty of them. In other words, a good duck hunter might miss dozens of ducks and still bag the limit! But if he keeps whining about the ones that got away, he won't—in fact, he can't—last long in this sport.

Going after a duck is a deliberate act; so is the art of leading people. Good leaders know their target. As a leader, you need to lead those who respond. No leader gets all the "ducks." You can't focus on the "missed ducks." There will always be those that got away. There will always be people who criticize you, or don't like you, or didn't vote for you, or refuse to cooperate with you.

Whether you're the president of the student body on campus or the president of a corporation, you need to keep your eye on the people who respond. Those are the "ducks" you bag and you must deliberately invest in them.

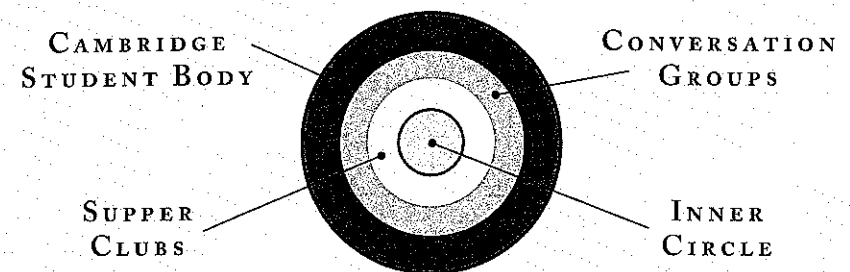
I have taught this principle at multiple conferences already, and I usually learn something each time I do. I recently had a duck hunter come up to me after my session and talk with me about his duck hunting experience. "If you focus on all the ducks," he said, "you won't hit any of them." Maybe you will accidentally hit one or two, but it's all chance. In duck hunting, you are aiming at a moving target. You don't focus on the ducks that are hiding. You watch for the a duck that is flying in plain sight and focus on that one. Similarly, leaders cannot go after everyone. They must know precisely who they want to "catch" and target them.

This is one of my favorite principles. Why? Because I had to learn it the hard way. When I first was put in a leadership position, I was a people pleaser. I wanted everyone to like me. I thought I had to win everybody to "my side." If somebody came to me with a complaint, I immediately made a program change. I literally tried to please everyone, but realized the hard way, that wasn't realistic. No leader will ever please every person. Some may never "get with your program." And that's OK. Some may get upset with you, even hurt your feelings, but your job is to concentrate on those who respond to your invitation to go on the journey. Leaders must learn to live with "missed ducks." They must learn to celebrate the ones they get!

Charles Simeon served as a vicar at Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Cambridge for fifty-four years. When he arrived, many from his congregation didn't like him. He was ridiculed and insulted by church members. Some folks even tried to kick him out of the parish. They didn't understand him.

Simeon desperately wanted to impact the English culture, but the Anglican Church was unproductive and irrelevant to the needs of people. He realized that traditional methods would not produce the results he wanted, so he had to change his approach. He decided to go "duck hunting." He began to focus on the students across the street at Cambridge University. He signed up to speak in chapel as often as they would let him. After the chapels, he invited those students who were interested in further study to meet him later that week for a Conversation Group. Simeon taught this group on a deeper level. He watched those who responded and challenged them further. At these Conversation Groups, he carefully observed the young leaders who were most responsive. Knowing he couldn't invest in everyone, he chose about fifteen of these student leaders to equip one evening a week at something he called Supper Clubs. The Supper Clubs met around his big British dining room table for deeper discussion and mentoring. Charles would spend hours pouring his life into this handful of students. And at these Supper Clubs, he would zero in on about three to four seniors who would graduate soon. They became his "inner circle." Simeon prepared these few seniors to lead a church once they graduated.

During this period of history, the wealthy people determined who filled the pulpits of their churches. Because of their big donations—they chose who became the vicar at their church. Consequently, Charles Simeon began to raise funds so he could place his young, trained leaders in positions to lead in these Anglican churches and ultimately change the culture. He quietly continued this practice for 54 years. By the time Simeon died, he had equipped and placed 1,100 young men as leaders of churches in England. Literally, one third of all the Anglican churches were led by Simeon's army of young leaders! In addition, he impacted men like William Wilberforce, who devoted his life to the abolition of slavery in England. Charles Simeon reached hundreds of thousands of people by focusing on a few "ducks" at a time. Notice his strategy below:



This principle is not about ignoring those who don't follow you. It's about challenging everyone to go on the journey with you—but investing in those who do. This principle isn't an excuse to have a tiny influence, or to ignore the masses or those who disagree with you. Even big rallies are the result of small networks that succeeded. The point, however, is that pouring into a core group actually increases your chances to move the masses. Leaders learn to overlook "missed ducks," knowing the few "committed ones" make the hunt successful.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Reflect on some historical or contemporary leaders who clarified their mission and screened out some followers along the way. Jot down what you have learned about "duck hunting" from these leaders.

Are you worried about "missed ducks?" Briefly explain.

Do you refuse to compromise the commitment it takes to lead effectively? What has motivated you to remain committed?

SELF ASSESSMENT

Think about the last time you tried to rally people to do something. Remember something you really were excited to do. Rate yourself in the following areas:

1. How was the response?

2. If not everyone responded positively, ask yourself, did it bother me? Did it hurt me? Was I upset?

3. Did I clarify the vision or compromise it to get more people?

4. Was I focusing on the missed ducks? (Do I struggle with people pleasing?)

EXERCISE

As a leader, consider the next project in which you want to get people involved. Approach it like a duck hunt. Write out your responses to these questions:

1. Who is your target audience?

2. Who might be a small core group of responsive people you could invest in to create momentum? Select that core group and equip them to own the vision and participate with you in it.

3. Can you get excited about this core group?

4. Can you stop worrying about the "missed ducks" (the people who don't respond)?
