

The Eagle's Nest

By Philip J. Lawson, J.D.

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What Every Leader Should Know About People

Philip J. Lawson, J.D.

Dr. John C. Maxwell

Part 2: Leading an Organization is About 95% People and About 5% Organization

In Part 1 of this topic of **What Every Leader Should Know About People**, we discussed four things a leader should know about people. Dr. Maxwell then provided information on what a leader should do in response to these characteristics.

1. People are insecure.

Give them confidence.

2. People like to feel special.

Sincerely compliment them.

(We discussed five comments on compliments.)

3. People look for a better tomorrow.

Show them hope.

(John Maxwell discussed "what hope does to mankind." John's list is one of the best comments I have ever come across on dealing with hope.)

4. People need to be understood.

Listen to them.

(We then talked about the five levels of influence and the 10 things a leader needs to know about each individual employee they supervise.)

In Part 2 we will be discussing six additional things every leader should know about people and what a leader should do in responding to this knowledge.

5. People lack direction.

Navigate for them.



"Unhappiness is not knowing what we want and killing ourselves to get it."

- Don Herold

"Our souls are not hungry for fame, comfort, wealth, or power. Those rewards create almost as many problems as they solve. Our souls are hungry for meaning, for the sense that we have figured out how to live so that our lives matter, so that the world will at least be a little bit different for our having passed through it."

- Harold Kushner

How to build the bridge in a person's life:

- **Picture** - What does the dream look like?
- **Process** - How are we going to do it?
- **Price** - How much will it cost?
- **Personnel** - Who can help us?
- **Problems** - What problems are we going to encounter along the way?
- **Partnership** - Let's do it together.
- **Potential** - What happens if we make it?

6. People are selfish.

Speak to their needs first.

There are two sides to every question – as long as it doesn't concern us personally.

Leaders...

- (1) Put their people first.
- (2) Know their people's needs.
- (3) See the total picture and how the company's mission will help them serve their needs

7. People get emotionally low.

Encourage them.

The secret of success is to not let what you're doing get to you before you get to it.

Walt Disney said that there are three kinds of people in the world today:

1 - Well-poisoners. They poison your life with discouragement.

2 - Lawn-mowers. They mow their own lawns and never leave their yard to help others.

3 - Life-enhancers. They reach out to enrich the lives of others.

8. People want to be associated with success.

Help them win.

"Victory has a thousand fathers, but defeat is an orphan."

- John F. Kennedy

What do these things all have in common?

High Morale, Optimism, Momentum, Enthusiasm, Energy, Fun = Winning.

"When you're winning, nothing hurts."

- Joe Namath

9. People desire meaningful relationships.

Provide community.

"The glory of friendship is not in the outstretched hand, nor the kindly smile, nor the joy of companionship; it is in the spiritual inspiration that comes to one when he discovers that someone else believes in him and is willing to trust him."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

10. People seek models to follow.

Be an example.

The early followers of St. Francis of Assisi wanted to know what to do when they took the streets. "Preach the gospel at all times," St. Francis advised. "If necessary, use words."

Dr. Maxwell then provides us with a Leadership Review and Reflection checklist that provides leadership questions to help you examine your own leadership style. Be objective and answer these ten questions. How do you rate on the ten things every leader should know about people?

Examine your own leadership and rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being best) in the following behaviors:

1. _____ Do I convey confidence to others?
2. _____ Do I compliment people and make them feel special?
3. _____ Do I look for ways to offer hope to others?
4. _____ Do I listen to and understand the key people in my life?
5. _____ Do I know where I am going and am I taking someone with me?
6. _____ Do I see things from the perspective of others and lead them accordingly?
7. _____ Do I encourage others and lift them up?
8. _____ Do I help people become more successful?
9. _____ Do I provide community where people can feel close to one another?
10. _____ Do I model for others a good example to follow?

Your answer to these ten questions will go a long way in determining what kind of leader you are or will become.

In closing, I want to share with you something that's very special to me. I have a special "treasure drawer" where I save things that I know will help me in working with young people who want to become leaders. In my treasure drawer I have collected

many special items over the 40 years I have worked as a human resource consultant or a management, labor, and employment lawyer.

The following "treasure" was provided to me by Brian Rhoades, Vice President of Operations, Consolidated Products, Knoxville, Tennessee. I consider Brian Rhoades to be in the top five best leaders I have had the privilege of working with during my career. Brian shares with his subordinate leaders what he feels they should know about him, both **personally** and **professionally**.

For me, one of the benefits of sharing this "values-based" data is that his subordinates can determine if Brian really is who he says he is – whether he is not only "talking the talk" but "walking the walk."

Brian exemplifies this kind of leader, the kind of leader we need in corporate America. Good leaders can become great leaders when they are supervised by "servant" leaders.

If you are a leader, at any level, consider providing those under your supervision with your own "statement of values," both personally and professionally. It is also great information to share with those you are recruiting or staffing in your own department.

This is the first time I have ever shared this information in my writings. I called Brian Rhoades and asked if I could share this information in this particular article. Brian gave me his gracious approval.

What you should know about me:

Personally:

- I have a strong personal faith; I behave and make decisions based on values derived from that faith.
- I am a committed father and husband. Next to my faith, nothing is more important to me.
- I have a good sense of humor and believe it is critical to working with others.
- I am passionate about those things in which I believe.

Professionally:

- I believe in being a servant leader. I can only effectively lead and coach you if I am willing to



serve you. Please do not hesitate to tell me what I can do to make your life easier and help you perform your work more effectively.

- I am a good teacher and believe that we must teach each other and be taught in order to grow.
- I have extremely high standards.
- I have no selfish agendas. I am here to make you successful and to achieve our corporate goals. Nothing else.
- I like to keep things simple. Clear.
- I want to hear bad news fast. Never be afraid to tell me bad news as soon as you hear it, even if you do not have the facts. I need to know news that could negatively impact our business in order to plan responses as quickly as possible.
- I will follow protocol whenever possible. I do not like to micro manage areas for which you have responsibility. That is your job. I will only give direction to someone in your area when the specific circumstances call for it.

- I move fast. We live in a public fish bowl. The water is tested and assessed every 90 days. We must move quickly to make decisions that have impact on our business.

- I try to improve and/or articulate the process. I believe it is critical for improving a business.

- I will push you and encourage you to improve your performance and to realize your potential.

- I do not tolerate sexual harassment.

This lesson, well received by you, in light of your tremendous responsibilities in encouraging employees to be all they can be, I hope that you will three-hole punch and file this article away for your future use. Mastering the concepts in this article will prove to be a blessing to you as a leader.

Think on these things!

Sincerely,
Philip J. Lawson

