

Tools for Wise Leadership

A programme of TWR-Africa, produced by TWR-Zimbabwe, presented by Rev Dr Roy Musasiwa

Series 11: Levels of Leadership

Talk 04: The People Development Level of Leadership

Welcome to the programme Tools for Wise Leadership. We are focusing on leadership levels and how they related to the kind of leader Jesus was. There are five levels of leadership, according to Christian leadership guru John Maxwell. We have so far discussed the position level of leadership where people follow the leader because they have to, not because they want to. We have also explored the permission level of leadership where people follow the leader who is a people person, who has established rapport with them. They therefore follow because they want to, not because they have to. The third level is the production level where people follow the leader because of the results the leader has produced for the company or organization. It is only when you are productive that you really start to become effective and you generate the momentum that will move you forward.

Today we move to an even higher level of leadership called the people development level. At this level people follow you as a leader because of what you've done for them. At this level you are not just a producer but a reproducer.

I like the well-known statement by Dowson Trotman, founder of the Navigator Movement. He said, "Activity is no substitute for production, and production is no substitute for reproduction." Trotman was saying something really significant here. There are some leaders who pride themselves as being really busy. But busy doing what? As long as there is nothing to show for it, the busyness is useless. Activity is indeed not a substitute for production. That is why in the last programme we emphasized the production level of leadership. But Trotman goes even further and says that even production is not a substitute for reproduction. It is this reproduction that Maxwell calls the people development level of leadership. At this level, a leader gains a new level of authority. He has personally impacted the lives of his team. The leader has poured his life into others. He has not only been a minister, but a mentor to others. He has developed the potential of key people. Real multiplication occurs at this level.

You see it is one thing to minister to a group, but quite another to mentor or disciple key individuals in that group. A leader is at their best when they are Leading leaders. But in order to engage in this level of leadership you need to remember that you do not reproduce what you want; you only reproduce what you are! So you must become a strong leader - a continually growing leader.

Now you might ask why mentoring leaders is really necessary? For me the biggest reason is that if we only produce without reproducing ourselves in others we can burn ourselves out and limit our effectiveness. Just consider the story in Exodus 18:14-23. There we are told that when Jethro saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, "What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone..." (Exodus 18:14-23).

Moses was heading for burn-out. From morning to evening he would sit as judge while the rest of the people stood around him as spectators, litigants or defendants. Cases ranged from petty to major, but they were all very time-consuming and emotionally demanding. At the end of the day some people returned to their camps frustrated and disgruntled because their cases had gone unheard for yet another day. It became a tale of exhaustion on the part of Moses and frustration on the part of the people he was leading.

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It took Jethro, Moses' father-in-law to show that this was an unsustainable situation. And what advice did Jethro offer?

“Teach them the decrees and laws, and show them the way to live and the duties they are to perform. But select capable men from all the people – men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain – and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all time, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you.”

In other words Moses was encouraged to mentor others and grow other leaders. We call this mentoring for growth.

In Christian terms mentoring is a relational way of developing leaders by imparting the conviction, character and competence necessary for their effective functioning. We now consider the pre-requisites, purposes, principles and practices of mentoring for growth.

Firstly, we consider are the pre-requisites for mentoring for growth. Here's the question: What do Moses, Jesus and Paul have in common? The answer is that they succeeded because they mentored their successors. They not only in themselves modelled qualities of good leadership; they effectively imparted these qualities in others so that they could also function effectively as leaders.

These people could effectively mentor others for growth because they chose to be leaders who develop leaders rather than leaders who develop followers. There are significant differences between the two types of leaders. The Million Leader Mandate (Book 2) mentions differences in desire, focus, priorities, attitude, time and impact, among others:

Think of differences in desire: Leaders who develop followers need to be needed. Leaders who develop leaders want to be succeeded. What is your predominant desire? Do you need to be needed, or do you want to be succeeded? If your desire is to grow people to the level where they could succeed you, then you are a leader of leaders, not of followers.

What about the difference in focus? Leaders who develop followers focus on the weaknesses of people. Leaders who develop leaders focus on the strengths of people. If you are always dwelling on the weaknesses of others and not their strengths, you are a leader of followers and not of leaders.

What about priorities? Leaders who develop followers devote effort to those with the most needs. Leaders who develop leaders devote effort to those with the most potential. Where are your personal priorities? Those with the most needs, or those with the most potential?

We can also think about the difference in attitude: Leaders who develop followers lift up themselves. Leaders who develop leaders lift up others.

What about usage of time? Leaders who develop followers spend time with people. Leaders who develop leaders invest time in people. Spending time with others does not necessarily change them. Investing time in them is more purposeful and intentional. Now that is mentoring.

There is also a difference in impact. Leaders who develop followers impact this generation. Leaders who develop leaders impact the next generation. The reason why Jesus impacted future generations is because he mentored others. He was a leader of leaders, and not a leader of followers.

These qualities constitute essential pre-requisites for mentoring others for growth. They are qualities exhibited by those who have found their security in God. Too often insecure leaders want

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others to stay dependent on them. They are always trying to gain value from others while secure leaders are able and willing to add value to others. It was Jesus' sense of security that made him declare, "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father" (John 14:12). Hence Jesus played the role of mentor, equipping and empowering others to do the work.

Well, the people production level of leadership is very rich and rewarding. We need to continue this discussion of people development in the next programme. In the meantime remember that activity is no substitute for production; and production is no substitute for reproduction. We should aim at the people production level. That is what Moses had to do. That is what Jesus spent most of his ministry time doing. That is what Paul teaches us as well.

Let's make a date and meet in the next programme for more exciting ideas on people development. God bless you.

Discussion Questions for: Series 11 - Talk 4 - The People Development Level of Leadership

For this series of *Levels of Leadership* you can use the following study questions to guide you in deepening the impact of this series:

Study Question 1: for Personal reflection

What does this episode mean to you personally as a leader?

Study Question 2: for Group Discussion

What does this topic mean you as a group of leaders?

Study Question 3: for applying the topic

What can you apply from this topic in your role as a leader?

Summary:

A leader needs to pass on leadership qualities. Thus an established a leader needs to reproduce leadership qualities in others.

Discussion Questions:

Study Question 1: Personal reflection

Since being busy does not prove good leadership, how can getting results help you establishing credibility as a leader?

Study Question 2: Group Discussion

How should we as leaders share the burden of leadership by prioritising and sharing tasks according to abilities amongst our teams?

Study Question 3: Applying the topic

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Am I the type of leader that can develop leaders? How can I focus on the strength of potential young leaders to share my leadership responsibilities with them?

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