

Leadership... Biblically Speaking (The Power of Principle-based Leadership), by David Cottrell, Cornerstone Leadership (Dallas, TX: 1998). (33 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols)

1. Leaders Clear Paths.

“The purpose of the leader is to clear a path for people to be successful in accomplishing a goal.” (p. 6)

2. Hire Smarter People than You Are.

“R. H. Grant once said, ‘When you hire people who are smarter than you are, you prove you are smarter than they are.’” (p. 7)

3. Disloyalty Stunt Performance.

“People are demonstrating their dissatisfaction by being disloyal to their leaders and companies. Many have become free agents, saying, ‘I’ll stay here until a better offer comes along.’ On the average, U.S. corporations now lose half their customers in five years, half their employees in four years, and half their investors in less than one year. Disloyalty at these rates stunts corporate performance by 25 to 50 percent. (Frederick Reichheld, *The Loyalty Effect* (Harvard Business Press, 1996) The cost of recruiting, hiring, training, and the lengthening of the productivity curve is staggering.” (p. 7)

4. Develop Strong Leaders, not Mission Statements.

“Many companies spend more time, money, and resources developing a mission statement than they do in developing strong leaders. In fact, some spend more money framing the mission statement than they do in equipping their leaders to be successful.” (p. 7)

5. Seven Causes of Unrest

“According to an executive study by J. C. Staehle (John Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You*, (Nelson, 1993.)), there are seven principal causes of unrest among workers:

- a. Failure to give credit for suggestions
- b. Failure to correct grievances
- c. Failure to encourage
- d. Criticizing employees in front of other people
- e. Failure to ask employees their opinions
- f. Failure to inform employees of their progress

g. Favoritism

All seven of these reasons are the result of poor interpersonal skills and the rampant ego of leaders. Such egos do not allow leaders to admit that they need their people more than their people need them. Nothing destroys people or organizations more quickly than leaders with egos out of control. Biblically-based leadership is servant leadership and eliminates all seven causes of unrest.” (p. 8)

6. Leaders Aren't Qualified Without God's Help.

Few leaders have accepted leadership positions without being overwhelmed and frightened by the responsibility. Without God's guidance and direction, none of us are qualified.” (p. 11)

7. Greater Risk Not Following God's Call.

“All changes in jobs, responsibilities, and business involve risks. These risks include looking foolish, making bad decisions, losing pride, and being held to a higher standard. There is far more exposure to risk for leaders than followers, but the greater risk is *not* following God's call for us.” (p. 12)

8. Put the Right Team Together.

“Admit your weakness and surround yourself with talented employees who can complement your weakness. Putting the right team together is the key to your leadership success.” (p. 12-13)

9. Don't Wait for Perfect Conditions.

“If you are waiting on perfect conditions before doing what needs to be done, you will never get anything done. The Bible says, ‘Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap’ (Ecclesiastes 11:4, niv). Don't wait on conditions to be perfect before you trust God's direction.” (p. 13-14)

10. Trusted Leaders.

“Leadership results improve in proportion to the level of trust earned by the leader.” (p. 19)

11. Integrity Most Important.

“In a study of 1300 senior executives, when asked which leadership trait--in a list of sixteen--has the single greatest impact in enhancing an executive's effectiveness, 71

percent listed integrity at the top.” (John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Nelson, 1993) (p.19)

12. Cornerstone of Leadership.

“Integrity is the cornerstone of leadership!” (p. 19)

13. Sacrificing Integrity.

“People want to be led by leaders whose words are congruent with their actions, who have earned their followers’ commitment and have proven to be honest and trustworthy. People want to follow leaders whose values are consistent and do not change based on the situation of the day. It sounds pretty simple, yet leaders’ sacrifice of integrity is the principle reason why people lose faith in their leaders and look for someone else to follow. Judgment errors are forgiven and forgotten; integrity mistakes are always remembered.” (p. 20)

14. Resemble Jesus Christ’s Conduct.

“God’s standard for integrity in leaders is living a walk and talk that resemble the conduct of Jesus Christ. Integrity is the principle leadership trait that influences positive results.” (p. 20)

15. God’s Standard of Integrity Is Different.

“The world’s standard for integrity is completely different from God’s standard. The Christian standard is do what is right regardless of the consequences. Paul wrote, ‘Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good’ (Romans 12:21, niv). The world’s standard is to do what is right when it is convenient, or do what you want to if your chances for getting caught are negligible. Today’s leaders must decide which side to choose; they cannot straddle the integrity gap.” (p. 22)

16. Character Judged Through Experience.

“Character and integrity can be judged *only* through trials and experiences.” (p. 22)

17. Integrity Is Rarely Recovered.

“When your integrity is sacrificed or even questioned for any reason, there is a huge price to pay for its recovery. People will forgive and forget judgement errors, but will not forget integrity mistakes.” (p. 29)

18. Leadership Begins with Integrity.

“If people don’t trust the messenger, they will not commit to the message. Leadership begins with the leader’s integrity. Without integrity, you can’t develop trust; without trust, you can’t develop people.” (p. 29)

19. Higher Standard for Yourself.

“Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than nobody else expects of you. Never excuse yourself.” --Henry Ward Beecher (p. 29)

20. Accepting Total Responsibility.

“Leadership results improve dramatically when the leader and his followers accept total responsibility for their actions.” (p. 31)

21. Accepting Responsibility Is Mandatory.

Successful leaders avoid the temptation to fix the blame by searching for ways to solve problems. Accepting responsibility means looking toward the future; making excuses and blaming others focus on the past. To be an effective leader, accepting responsibility is not optional; it is mandatory. Being responsible leads to calmness, confidence, and self-control--all qualities of an effective leader.” (p. 32)

22. Always Lead and Everything Counts.

“When you accept your leadership position, you inherit the responsibility of being accountable for your actions and certain aspects of your followers’ actions. Two of the truths of leadership is that you always lead and everything you do counts.” (p. 33)

23. Leading Others in the Direction They Should Be Going.

“Successful leadership requires that choices be made based upon moral and spiritual considerations affecting both leaders and followers. It is your responsibility to use your influence to lead others in the direction they should be going.” (p. 33)

24. Accountability Higher Than Followers.

“Along with accepting responsibility comes the realization that the leader’s standard for accountability is at a higher level than that of his followers. Jesus taught about accountability of leadership: ‘Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly’ (James 3:1,

niv). The same strict judgement of leaders applies today.” (p. 34)

25. Employees Reflect Leaders.

“The former president of Hyatt Hotels stated, ‘If there is anything I have learned in my 27 years in the service industry, it is this: 99 percent of all employees want to do a good job. How they perform is simply a reflection of one for whom they work.’” (David Hartley-Leonard, “Perspectives,” *Newsweek*, August 24, 1987) In other words, the responsibility for the success of employees’ results falls directly on the leader.” (p.35)

26. Four Areas of Christian Leaders’ Responsibility.

“There are four major areas of a Christian leader’s responsibility:

- Achieving results through others
- Creating and protecting quality time
- Creating a positive environment for success
- Obedience to God” (p. 35)

27. Responsibility to Hold People Accountable.

“How many times have you heard people say, ‘Why does our company keep [him] around?’ If there is no negative consequence of bad behavior or poor performance, you can’t expect the bad behavior or poor performance to disappear. Followers must be held accountable for getting the job done, or the job will not get done. Someone once said, ‘The only day that everyone should be able to do whatever they want to do is their last day on the job.’ It is the leader’s responsibility to hold people accountable for doing what they are supposed to do.” (p. 37)

28. Leaders Responsible for Followers Doing What Supposed to Do.

“Who is responsible for your followers doing what they are supposed to do? Clear direction, providing the tools, defining the purpose, positive rewards, accountability, continual communications, prioritization, and empowerment are all the ultimate responsibility of the leader!” (p. 39)

29. Create Dedicated Blocks of Time.

“Dedicate time for decision making, administrative tasks, creative time for you, and time for your employees. Focused time is more productive than trying to do many tasks at once. The more activities completed in blocks of time, the more you will be able to accomplish in less time. You can gain 5, 10, or 20 minutes a day by improving your productivity through batching like activities.” (p. 40)

30. Unproductive Meetings Are Time Robbers.

“It is the leader’s responsibility to make meetings productive. Meetings are necessary to facilitate communications but can be the most misused corporate resource. One of the largest expense items that does not appear on the income statement is meetings. Very seldom are people held accountable for the efficiency of their meetings. Ineffective meetings are a waste of time, money, energy, and emotions.

“After years of evaluating meetings, these are my observations about most meetings:

- Most meetings do not have a definite purpose.
- Most meetings do not follow an agenda.
- Most meetings conclude without assignment of follow-up actions.
- Most meetings do not record any of the discussion
- Most meetings include non-essential personnel, which load them up and reduce effectiveness.

“In addition to the mismanagement of the logistics of meetings, once the meetings begins another group of meeting productivity killers arrive when the meeting begins:

- Most meetings are too long--participants would be able accomplish twice as much in half the time if the meeting was properly managed.
- Eating where you are meeting is a productivity and time killer. Soft chairs and doughnuts will lengthen any meeting. Focus on the meeting, not the menu.
- Most meetings spend more time on unrelated topics than they spend on the agenda topics. The typical meeting leader does not frame questions around issues to facilitate discussion.
- Most meetings are conducted without having all the facts available to make good decisions.
- Most meetings have participants who do not tell the whole truth because they are afraid of what others think of them.
- Most meetings end without anything happening. Why have a meeting if there is no resulting action? Ask the participants three hours after a meeting what was accomplished, and their responses may surprise you.

“Meetings are a major expense. A four-hour meeting of twelve executives with an average salary of \$75,000 costs about \$1800 in executive time. Is the meeting that you planned worth \$1800? What will be the return on the investment? You are accountable to answer those questions before you call a meeting.” (p.42-43)

31. Leaders Create Success Environments.

“Effective leaders create a climate in which success can happen naturally. That climate

is created through positive recognition, feedback for improvement, consistent communication, and empowering your employees to do their jobs.

“Okay, I can hear you saying, ‘But my boss does not set a climate for success, so how can I?’ I know exactly what you mean. I have been there. It is frustrating. Remember, your role as a Christian leader is to create a positive environment for your people and also create a positive relationship with your boss. Managing your relationship with your boss involves applying the same principles as leading your subordinates. What you control is your attitude and your actions. You cannot change his or her behavior but you can lead by example so that others might choose to change.” (p. 46)

32. Obedience to God.

“As Christian leaders, we accept responsibility for our obedience to God. Regardless of the circumstance, we are responsible for others seeing Jesus in us and for living our commitment to Christ through our actions. This commitment is under our control. We should not be concerned about the reaction of others to our obedience to God.”(p. 46)

33. Responsibility Changes.

“When you accept your leadership role, a change in responsibility comes along with a change in title. You always lead, and everything you do counts. You are responsible for everything you control, including (1) knowing why your followers do not do what they are supposed to do, (2) the productive use of your time and your meetings, (3) creating a climate that allows your followers to be heroes, and (4) your obedience to God.” (p. 47)