

Leaders: Learning Leadership from Some of Christianity's Best by Harold Myra, ed. (World Book Publishers, 1987) (18 Quotes Selected by Doug Nichols)

1. Do you enjoy leading?

That's a tough question. I enjoy studying and practicing leadership, but I dislike its loneliness. I dislike the fact that sometimes the process that went into a decision cannot be made known. You have to appear ignorant or off-base because you will do more harm if you explain *why* than if you just keep your mouth closed and move ahead. A lot of pastors feel that pressure follows decisions regarding personnel; they're seldom at liberty to disclose all the reasons behind their decisions.

I also dislike conflict and strife, yet that is part of leadership.

Basically, I want to be thoroughly equipped at whatever I do, I want to be genuinely concerned about my brother, and I want to be the kind of person the Lord wants me to be. If I do those things, I will be demonstrating leadership. (Page 31)

2. A Jewish Story

There is a Jewish story about a little boy who went to a prophet and said, "Prophet, don't you see? You have been prophesying now for fifteen years, and things are still the same. Why do you keep on?"

And the prophet said, "Don't you know, little boy, I'm not prophesying to change the world, but to prevent the world from changing me." (Page 43)

3. Silent Prayer When God is Control

The spiritual life is not something we add on to an already busy life. What we are talking about is to impregnate and infiltrate and control what we already do with an attitude of service to God. For pastors, this might mean silent prayer in their board meetings. One of the greatest revelations to me was to experiment with being in communion with God in board meetings. I learned I didn't always have to speak and control, and that I could pray for people in the room who had a heaviness with life. It's like living on two levels. On one you are doing the activities of the day, but on a deeper, more profound level, there is this inward prayer and worship. (*Foster*) (Page 44)

4. Why do we tolerate the Telephone and Television

Nouwen The obvious assumption of always answering the phone is that the person on the phone has something more important to say than what you are saying, which is not true. The same applies to Television. My mother always said, "I don't understand why

you tolerate this stranger talking in the middle of my room. We didn't invite him. Turn him off." (Page 45)

5. Ending Meetings Both Social & Business

Foster: I have another suggestion for discipline that I have found very helpful. Tell people not only when a meeting starts, but when it ends. I don't mean only business meetings, but social meetings too. I always invite students from eight to ten in the evening. At ten I say, "Let's close with prayer." (Page 45)

6. Analyzing Our Leadership

We should be asking ourselves constantly: Are power and leadership things I'm using to promote self, career, and prestige? Or are they being used as a way of serving Christ and bringing people into a relationship with Christ? In other words, are we the master or are we the servant? (Page 52)

7. Things a Leader Must Do

What Must a Leader Actually do?

Three things. First, the leader must demonstrate commitment to the goals, objectives, and spirit of the program or organization he is leading. That commitment cannot be half-hearted; it has to be a total commitment.

Second, the leader must translate the institution's objectives into the lives of followers. A leader must make the objectives relevant and helpful for people, and show he genuinely cares for them.

Third, a leader always has to be alert to changes. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and the pastor's message contains a continuity of truth. But that does not mean conditions around that truth are not changing. Cultural change, social change, and political changes affect every person and institution, and a leader has to recognize change and adapt, so that he or she never loses relevancy. (Page 53-54)

8. Lack of Intensity & Good Leadership

Many hard working people fail to accomplish much because they lack intensity at the meaningful time.

Good leadership picks out the crucial elements and places something extra at these points. (Page 60)

9. Results—Activity

Results are the only reason for activity. (Page 61)

10. Supervisor’s Responsibility

“An executive is not a person who can do the work better than his people; he is a person who can get his people to do the work better than he can.” My responsibility is to be a *supervisor*, not a *superworker*. A little selective laziness is not all bad. It increases the thinking time. (Page 61)

11. Decisions About Failures

The earlier you make a decision about a failure and “cut your loss,” the less actual waste. People who wait around trying to find the pleasant, comfortable moment to make difficult decisions and difficult changes are simply kidding themselves. You can hide behind “We’re going to wait and pray about it,” But when you *know* the situation is going wrong, then do something to alleviate it. The answer to most problems is the right people in the right places. (Page 62)

12. Do Top Priority First.

Andrew Carnegie once asked a consultant, “What can you do for me about time control?”

The consultant said, “I’ll make one suggestion, and you send me a check for what you think it is worth. Write down what you have to do on a piece of paper in order of priority, and complete the first item before you go to the second.” It’s reported that Carnegie tried it for a few weeks and sent him a check for ten thousand dollars. (Page 63)

13. Management & Leadership

Management is the process of assuring that the program and objectives we have set are implanted.

Leadership, on the other hand, is the process of motivating people. (Page 158)

14. Business Objectives not Good for Church

Business exists to make financial profit; without profit the business dies, and no other objectives can be accomplished. So I would say that running a church, you should not use business *objectives*.

But in administering church programs, you should consider using good business *principles*. (Page 159)

15. The Pastor Must Initiate Spiritual Goals

I expect the pastor to be the initiator of clearly defined, easily understood spiritual goals. I don't expect him to develop all the programs to accomplish these goals, but he has to initiate them. (Page 160)

16. Delegate Administration Only

You can delegate administration, but you can't delegate accountability. (Page 160)

17. Delegation is a Must

I feel I've been a more effective leader when others have actually done the work. And I want everyone to know who accomplished what. It's the same with pastors. The feeling that you can do the job better yourself makes delegation difficult. But delegation is a must in any organization, and I believe that people will execute a plan more successfully if it's *their* plan too. (Page 161)

18. A Leader should not feel threatened by an individual

A symphony conductor is not usually the best French horn player, and he doesn't feel threatened. His role is to make the whole orchestra function to its potential. You should not feel threatened by an individual with great administrative skills, for example. Use him; help him realize his potential within the church. (Page 161)