



Leaders BOOK SUMMARIES

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Developing the Leaders Around You

How to Help Others Reach Their Full Potential

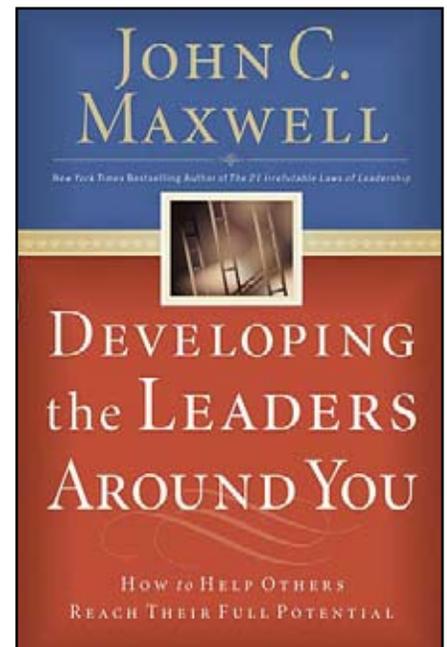
THE SUMMARY

Chapter 1: The Leader's Key Question: Am I Raising Up Potential Leaders?

Great leaders—those who are truly successful—all have one thing in common. They know that acquiring and developing people is a leader's most important task. They know that the one asset that appreciates in value in any organization is people. If you want to be a successful leader, you must develop other leaders around you. You must find a way to get your vision seen, implemented, and contributed to by others. The leader has vision, but he needs other leaders to help make his mental picture a reality.

The key to surrounding yourself with other leaders is to find the best people you can, then develop them into the best leaders they can be. There are several reasons great leaders focus on this:

Those closest to the leader will determine the success level of that leader. This is the greatest leadership principle I've learned in more than 30 years of leadership. The people



About the Author

John Maxwell is considered one of this country's foremost leadership experts. He has been a successful pastor, businessman, and author, having written over 40 books, and is in great demand as a speaker and consultant.

Leaders Book Summaries: **Developing the Leaders Around You**

around me will make or break me; if I develop them, together we can do amazing things.

An organization's growth potential is directly related to its personnel potential. When I was pastor of Skyline Wesleyan Church in San Diego, I told the staff several times that in order for the church to grow, they would have to grow and change. It would be my responsibility to train them and help them make the changes needed for the church to grow.

Potential leaders help carry the load. Leaders often fail to develop other leaders either because they lack training or they have wrong attitudes about allowing and encouraging others to come alongside them. I've found that other leaders lift my load by being a sounding board for me and helping me in areas like decision-making, brainstorming, and providing direction.

Leaders attract potential leaders. I believe it takes a leader to know a leader, grow a leader, and show a leader—and it takes a leader to attract a leader. Birds of a feather really do flock together.

Leaders who mentor potential leaders multiply their effectiveness. Ultimately much more gets done when leaders are developed and work together.

Developed leaders enhance the future of the organization. My dad once told me that the most expensive workers were not the highest paid; the most expensive ones were those who were unproductive. While you had to pay leaders more, they were an invaluable asset. They got more done, attracted other leaders, and continued to add value to the organization.

Chapter 2: the Leader's Toughest Challenge—Creating a Climate for Potential Leaders

Creating an environment that will attract leaders is vital to any organization. The leaders in any organization must be the environmental change agents, more like a thermostat than a thermometer. The attitude of the leader, coupled with a positive atmosphere in the organization, can encourage people to accomplish great things. And consistent, positive accomplishment generates momentum, which is often the only difference between a growth climate and the opposite. Unfortunately, leaders in some organizations don't recognize the importance of climate in building leaders, or don't understand how it works. Here are some ways to develop a good climate:

Model the desired style of leadership. Part of creating an appealing climate is modeling leadership, because people will do what they see. What leaders do and value, the people around them will do and value.

Focus on potential. Identify the potential in each future leader and cultivate it in light of the needs of the organization.

Focus on the potential leader's needs & desires. Great leaders focus on the desires of their people, because they know that people don't care how much they know until they know how much they care.

Look for the leader within the person. There is no future in any job; the future lies in the person who holds the job. It takes a leader with vision to see the future leader within the person.

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Focus on production, not position or title. In organizations that focus on production, energy is given to doing the job well; organizations that focus on position get people just seeking to climb the ladder.

Provide growth opportunities. People who are unaware of opportunities can never take advantage of them. Ask yourself, "What does this person need to grow?" Spend time with them, connect them with others successful people, provide tools and resources, etc.

Spend more effort on the "farm team" than on free agents. Recruiting from within has many advantages: you already know the person's character and attitude; they already know the organization and its people; they have a track record with you, and you know their gifts and abilities.

Make difficult decisions. This especially applies to dealing with poor performers. Ask, "Does this person need to be trained, transferred, or terminated?" and then take appropriate action.

Pay the price that attracts leaders. To create a climate for potential leaders requires the leader to pay a price too. That primarily means paying the price to continually grow—great leaders are perpetual learners. That will set the pace and example for those who follow you.

Chapter 3: The Leader's Primary Responsibility—Identifying Potential Leaders

Even scarcer than ability is the ability to recognize ability. This is critical for any

successful leader. If you select the right people for your organization, the benefits grow tremendously. But if you select poorly, the opposite can happen. Too often, leaders hire haphazardly, either due to lack of preparation, lack of time, or just plain ignorance, and then hope everything turns out ok. Selecting the right people needs to be done strategically. Here's how.

Look to hire the best people possible. Leaders tend to hire people whose ability and expertise are less than their own. Over time, that means more and more people are hired with less and less expertise, which lowers the quality of the company overall. Here are some ways to keep hiring the best possible people:

- Make hiring the responsibility of a highly developed leader.
- Hire the most highly developed leaders you can get—one great person will out-produce two mediocre ones.
- Commit to modeling leadership—people will follow your example and grow.
- Commit to developing those around you—as people become better leaders, they will hire better people.

To hunt for leaders, you must know what they look like. Here's what I look for:

Character. Nothing is more important than this—serious character flaws will eventually make a leader ineffective every time.

Some warning signs include: failing to take responsibility for their actions, unfulfilled obligations, and failing to meet deadlines.

Influence. Every leader is going somewhere, and is able to persuade others to go with him. Look at their level of influence and who is influenced by him.

Positive Attitude. This is one of the most

Leaders Book Summaries: **Developing the Leaders Around You**

valuable assets a person can have in life. Often a person's problem isn't their real problem—it's their attitude toward the problem that is the problem.

Excellent People Skills. A leader without people skills soon has no followers. These skills include a genuine concern for others, the ability to understand people, and the ability to make positive interactions with people a priority.

Evident Gifts. We need to objectively assess people's combination of gifts and level of gifting, as well as how to develop those gifts.

Proven Track Record. Leaders who learn from experience develop successful track records over time. A proven track record doesn't mean they haven't made mistakes—it means they have learned from those mistakes and gone on to make an impact.

Confidence. People will not follow a leader who does not have confidence in himself; in fact, they are naturally attracted to those who are confident. And confidence is contagious—a great leader instills confidence in his people.

Self-Discipline. Great leaders always have self-discipline, without exception. Two areas it is particularly needed are in handling our emotions and not being ruled by them, and managing our time. Everyone has the same amount of time; a person's level of self-discipline dictates how effectively they use that time.

Effective Communication Skills. Without the ability to communicate, a leader cannot effectively cast his vision and call his people to act on that vision. When I evaluate this skill, I look at whether a leader has a real concern for the person or people he's talking to, if he is able to focus on the other person, whether he can communicate with a variety of people, and whether he's friendly.

Discontent with the Status Quo. This doesn't mean being negative or grumbling; it does mean always looking for how to improve and achieve more.

Good leaders seek out and find potential leaders. Great leaders find them and then transform them into other great leaders. Both start with being able to recognize and identify *potential* leaders.

Chapter 4: The Leader's Crucial Task—Nurturing Potential Leaders

Once you have identified potential leaders, you need to begin to build them into the leaders they can become. Nurturing leaders includes believing in them, encouraging them, sharing with them, and trusting them. Most of all, it includes modeling leadership for them. All of the things we are about to cover need to be modeled by you for them. Even when you are in the process of giving to people around you, you are also modeling.

Here are the things I have found a leader must do to nurture the potential leaders around him:

Choose a leadership model for yourself. As leaders we need to find good models for ourselves. Give careful thought to which leaders you will follow because they will determine your course. I look at the strengths and weaknesses of potential models, their impact, and whether I can reproduce their strengths in my life.

When you find a good model, seek out a mentoring relationship with them. To make the most of it, think through what you want, what your expectations are, and

Leaders Book Summaries: **Developing the Leaders Around You**

what questions you want to ask. Adopt a learning posture, and practice immediately putting into effect what you are learning.

Build Trust. Trust is the single most important factor in both personal and professional relationships. It must be built day by day, over time. Some of the ways a leader can lose trust include breaking promises, gossiping, and being two-faced. Once people trust you as a person, they will trust you as a leader.

Show Transparency. All leaders make mistakes. Successful leaders recognize their errors, learn from them, and work to correct them. What they don't do is hide them, rationalize them, or blame others.

Offer Time. People cannot be nurtured from a distance or by short, infrequent bursts of attention. They need you to spend planned time with them. In our busy world, time is a difficult thing to give—it is a leader's most valuable commodity. So it means a lot when it is given.

Believe in People. When you believe in people, you motivate them and release their potential. And people intuitively know when a person really believes in them. Anyone can see people as they are; it's powerful when a leader sees them as they can be.

Give Encouragement. Too many leaders expect people to encourage themselves. Most people need outside encouragement to move forward. Don't take people for granted—praise a person every time you see improvement.

Exhibit Consistency. When we are consistent, people learn to trust us. They are able to grow and develop because they

know what to expect from us.

Hold Hope High. Hope is one of the greatest gifts leaders can give to those around them. Never underestimate its power. Maintaining hope comes from seeing the potential in every situation and staying positive despite circumstances.

Add Significance. People want to do work that matters. One way you can add significance to people's lives is to make them part of something worthwhile. Helping them act on their dreams is another way, as is helping them to see the big picture of what they are involved in and how their actions are making a difference.

Reward Production. People give us what we reward. If you want your people to produce, then reward production.

Establish a Support System. Nothing hurts morale more than asking people to do something and not giving them the resources to accomplish it. Give your people emotional support, skills training, money, equipment, and personnel—the things they need to get the job done.

Personalize the Potential Leader's Journey. Disciplining another person involves discerning where they are, where they are supposed to go, and giving them what they need to get there. Focus 80% of your time on the most promising 20% of the leaders around you. Choose people you genuinely believe in, determine what they need, evaluate their progress constantly, and be available to help them and give them input.

Chapter 5: The Leader's Daily Requirement—Equipping Potential Leaders

Leaders Book Summaries: **Developing the Leaders Around You**

Equipping people is about preparing people for leadership. I prefer the term “equipping” to “training” because training is generally focused on specific job tasks; training is only a part of the equipping process that prepares a person for leadership.

Equipping is an ongoing process. You don’t equip a person in a few days! The ideal equipper is a person who can impart the vision for the work, evaluate the potential leader, give him the tools he needs, and then help him along the way at the beginning of his journey. The equipper is a model, a mentor, and an empowerer.

Effective equipping begins with asking questions; I ask three sets of questions:

Questions about the organization. These questions will determine what equipping needs to be done and the direction it should take to best serve the organization. What is the purpose of the organization? What is the primary need of the organization? Is there a training program in place to meet that need? What areas of the organization have the greatest growth potential? These questions help me make sure that any equipping serves the needs of the organization, and reveals the direction the equipping must take.

Questions about myself. These make clear how the equipping will be done. Am I willing to pour my life into others? Am I committed to being an equipper, and am I effective in the areas I need to equip? Have I made any assumptions about the people I’m considering that I need to change?

Questions about the potential leader.

The goal here is to narrow down the list of prospective leaders to the few people with the most potential. Is this person philosophically compatible with the organization and with me? Does this person show potential for growth? Do I have any lingering questions about them? Am I selecting this person because of obvious strengths or because of no glaring weaknesses? (When you look for potential leaders, look for strengths, not a lack of weaknesses). Finally, what is the leader’s fit—do they fit with the job, and with the team?

Now that you know *who* you are going to equip and for *what*, you can get started. Take these steps to equip with excellence:

Develop a relationship with them. Listen to their stories and identify their strengths and weaknesses. Get to know them outside of work.

Share your dream. While getting to know your people, share your dream. Knowing your heart and your motivation helps them to know you and where you’re going.

Ask for commitment. Commitment is the one quality above all others that enables a potential leader to become a successful leader. Don’t equip those that are only interested; look for commitment. To determine if they are committed, make sure they know the cost of becoming leaders.

Set goals for growth. People need clear objectives set before them if they are to achieve anything of value. Success comes from taking many small steps.

Communicate the fundamentals. Make sure they know what their fundamental

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responsibilities are, and what they are not responsible for. Then they can focus their efforts, and be successful.

Provide training. Show them what to do, and then have them do it with you watching and giving feedback. People learn by doing.

Give the "big three." People need responsibility, authority, and accountability. That gives them structure plus the freedom to be creative.

Give them the tools they need. Tools include more than equipment; give them developmental tools—spend money on things like books, tapes, seminars and conferences, and spend time mentoring them.

Check on them systematically. Touch base frequently, and give mini-evaluations all the time, not just at an annual review. People need ongoing encouragement when they are doing well and quick feedback if they aren't.

Chapter 6: The Leader's Lifelong Commitment—Developing Potential Leaders

If you nurture and equip the best people around you, you can consider yourself an above-average leader. If you want to be a great leader, you need to go further. The very best leaders take their people to the next step and develop them so they can reach their potential. It's hard work, which is why most leaders don't take this final step.

Because the development of leaders

requires time, attention, and commitment, a developer can only work with very few people at a time. Nurture all your people, equip many, but only develop a few. Here are the key actions a leader must take to develop potential leaders into the best they can be.

First look at their motivation. What do they want? And do they have a way of getting what they want? People who want something but see no way to get it will not be motivated. They also have to believe that the rewards will outweigh the work required to achieve those goals.

Once you know what motivates them, harness that motivation to help them develop. Put together a personal growth plan with them. Few people actually do it, but personal growth needs to be deliberate, planned, and consistent. There are several key practical steps to personal growth:

Set aside time daily for growth. The key is *daily*—educators report that people learn more effectively in regular short sessions than infrequent long ones.

File quickly what you learn. You want to be able to access it later.

Apply quickly what you learn. Application is what makes new learning part of you.

Get other people to grow with you.

Plan your growth and follow it for a year. If you follow through, you will grow tremendously over time.

Even though you'll be helping people create a personal growth plan, you will also need to teach them yourself. Ideally, you will share what you are learning in

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your own development. Share information with them, and give them a variety of experiences that will stretch them.

Strive for excellence yourself—this will encourage your people to shoot for the top. It also reveals your people’s character. Excellence breeds character and character breeds excellence. And when they achieve or produce, reward them. Behavior that is quickly rewarded gets repeated!

Rewarding the positive takes effort; confronting negative behavior is tougher. Many people avoid confrontation because they fear being disliked or rejected, but the truth is avoiding confrontation always worsens the situation. But confrontation, done well, is a win-win situation, and can be an opportunity to help and develop your people.

People respond differently to development. I’ve found that people will grow or plateau at one of six levels of development:

1. Some growth.
2. Growth that makes them capable in their job.
3. Growth that makes them able to reproduce themselves in their job.
4. Growth that takes them to a higher level job.
5. Growth that allows them to take others higher.
6. Growth that allows them to handle any job. (Rare).

You will have to make hard decisions about every person you develop. Your job is to help them as long as they are willing to keep going and growing. When a person stops growing, that’s when you have to do something difficult: leave that person behind. Your relationship can continue, but

your development of that person won’t. You have limited time, so you invest it in those who keep on producing a return on your investment.

Chapter 7: The Leader’s Highest Return—Forming a Dream Team of Leaders

Developing leaders is both fulfilling and rewarding. But developing a team of leaders is even better. A good team is always greater than the sum of its parts, but teams of leaders increase their effectiveness exponentially. All successful teams share some common characteristics:

Team members care for one another.

Team members know what is important.

They are clear on what a “win” is.

Team members communicate with one another. Formal lines of communication must be established, as well as a general atmosphere of positive communication.

Team members grow together. Growth should include shared experiences, like conferences, seminars, or reading books together, and communication that helps team members stay connected.

There is a team fit. As teams get to know each other, they start to appreciate each other’s strengths and unique qualities, and understand their unique roles and how they each fit together.

Team members put the team first.

Team members are willing to pay the price. Success comes down to sacrifice, a willingness to pay the price. On winning teams the members of the team sacrifice time and energy to practice and prepare, and put their personal desires second to the needs of the team.

Leaders Book Summaries: **Developing the Leaders Around You**

Chapter 8: The Leader's Greatest Joy—Coaching a Dream Team of Leaders

In order to become a dream team coach, these qualities must be developed:

A dream team coach chooses players well. Choosing the right people is vital!

A dream team coach consistently communicates the game plan. A great coach has a plan for each game as well as a plan for how to develop the team over the course of the season, and communicates it constantly, so everyone is on the same page.

A dream team coach takes the time to huddle. When a team huddles, it refocuses on the game plan and how to implement it. A huddle provides focus, an opportunity to make play changes and personnel changes, and a chance to rest for a moment.

A dream team coach knows what his players prefer. In a recent study, employees said the things they valued most were appreciation for a job well done, feeling like they are “in” on things, and management understanding their personal problems.

A dream team coach excels in problem solving. Problems with players usually require good communication skills; Problems with preparation usually require creativity (people often get bored preparing); problems in the actual game usually require quick decisions that are communicated immediately.

A dream team coach provides support needed for success. They develop a culture of encouragement and affirmation, and work hard to keep things simple and clear.

A dream team coach commands the respect

of the players. Respect is earned over time by being trustworthy, by caring, and by being willing to make hard decisions (players cannot respect a coach who won't make the decisions necessary for the team to succeed).

A dream team coach does not treat everyone the same. Top performers are rewarded with opportunities, resources, and playing time that others don't get.

A dream team coach continues to win. Even harder than winning is continuing to win. To do that, coaches focus on not dwelling on the past, continuous improvement, and avoiding burning out their players.

A dream team coach knows how to delegate. Many don't delegate because of their own insecurity, a lack of confidence in others, lack of know-how, lack of time, reluctance due to past failure, or an “I do it best” mentality. But learning how to delegate effectively is the most powerful tool any coach has.

Chapter 9: The Leader's Finest Hour—Realizing Value To and From Leaders

Through the development process, both new leaders and the developers have value added to their lives. Adding value is much more than personal promotion or organizational development. Adding value is about the enrichment of people's quality of life, the expansion of their life purpose and capabilities. It is life-changing for everyone involved.

A few years ago I surveyed many of my leaders and asked them: “What value do I add to you, and what value do I receive from you?” I wanted to get concrete examples

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that show the tangible results. Here are their responses:

The value I add to them:

- Modeling leadership, which shows both what is expected and what can be accomplished.
- Providing vision and direction, which helps people stay focused.
- Giving encouragement and affirmation, which includes communicating that I care for them. People today are extremely under-encouraged.
- Believing in them, which helps them rise to new heights and try new things.
- Making personal growth and development a priority.
- Being part of something greater than themselves, which enables them to have an eternal impact.

These leaders have also added a lot to my life. If I got nothing in return, I would still develop people, but that isn't how it works. I always get more in return than I give. Here are some of the ways:

- Loyalty, as an expression of the esteem they feel for me.
- Encouragement.
- Personal counsel and support—I'm not limited to my own wisdom.
- Follow-Through. I have a great group of people that I know will follow through on a task or project to the very end. They implement ideas, complete projects, handle details, and solve problems for me.
- Time. The people around me allow me to focus my time on the things that only I can do.
- The people around me balance my gifts and make up for my deficiencies

with their gifts.

- Increased influence. Because of the work of the people around me, the things I do touch and influence many more people than if I was on my own.

When you develop leaders rather than followers, they will do the same for you!

Chapter 10: The Leader's Lasting Contribution—Reproducing Generations of Leaders

A leader who produces followers limits his success to what his direct, personal influence touches. His success ends when he no longer leads. However, a leader who produces other leaders multiplies his influence, and he and his people have a future. His organization continues to build and grow even if he is personally unable to carry on his leadership role.

The final, true test of success for a leader who develops other leaders is this: Are those leaders carrying on the tradition of development and producing a third generation of leaders? If not, the building process stops with them. True success comes only when every generation continues to develop the next generation.

Many leaders make the mistake of thinking they can only develop people like themselves, in personality, temperament, gifts, abilities, etc. But that isn't true. There are three things required for a person to become a leader:

Desire. The ability to become a leader begins with desire; it's the one thing that the developer cannot supply. The amount of desire will largely determine the potential

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leader's progress.

Relational Skills. I have never met a great leader who didn't have good relational skills. Without them a person cannot lead effectively. Regardless of personality, these can be acquired.

Practical leadership skills. These are the "how-tos" of leadership that a person acquires through your modeling, equipping, and developing.

Leaders who don't develop people will one day find themselves hitting a wall in their success. That has been true for me—I'm an energetic person, but I've hit the limits of my physical energy. The only way I can do more is by doing it through other people. Any leader who learns that lesson and makes it a lifestyle will never hit the wall again.

So I ask you, are you developing the leaders around you?

The Pastor's Perspective

Several themes emerged over and over in Maxwell's book. No matter what the chapter heading was, there were some core ideas that stood out just due to the repetition.

The first was the importance of selecting the right people. I completely agree with Maxwell, but there are a couple challenges with this, especially in a small to medium-sized church. There may not be any, or many, people who meet the requirements. I've often heard this from other pastors.

My experience has been that you have to start where you are. If you begin to nurture, equip, and develop the people you have, even if they aren't leaders, then God will bring you more. It's the "faithful with little, faithful with much" principle. And starting where you are, with whoever is around you, will give you the opportunity to grow in your ability to raise people up, which most guys I know don't have a lot of experience with.

The second challenge goes to our mindset as pastors. Investing in a select few can feel like playing favorites, and that seems wrong to us. But Jesus did it—the Twelve got more attention than his other followers, and three of those got even more attention. It isn't about playing favorites; it is about investing our time and energy for maximum impact. Ironically, doing so will ultimately be good for everyone, as we end up with more people who can share the load.

The other theme that stood out was the priority of being a model. There is no getting around the fact that developing ourselves and continually growing is a key to being able to develop others. I would almost say it is a prerequisite. And again, most pastors I know aren't doing it. Certainly most of us don't have a personal growth plan that we are committed to. But the longer I go on in ministry and in life, the more I believe it is absolutely essential. It isn't selfish; it is being accountable. We are called to invest in and develop the gifts and talents God has given us, and we will be held accountable for it.

It's way too easy in ministry to let the

Leaders Book Summaries: **Developing the Leaders Around You**

demands or needs of other people stop us—we believe we don't have the time, money, or energy needed to invest in ourselves. I think this is a big mistake. In my church, we have two budgets for leadership development—one for me, and one for the other leaders. And I spend every penny that is in my budget! Books, seminars, coaching networks—I consider them absolutely essential, and I encourage every leader to think the same. In short, before you can develop the leaders around you—make sure you are developing the leader inside you. It pays off all the way around.

As I close this perspective, I want to make a suggestion to you. One of the things that Maxwell promotes is resourcing your people to help them grow. Have you considered a church subscription to these book summaries? With a church subscription you can put as many people from your church as you want on one subscription...you can resource all your leaders really inexpensively. For \$29.95/month, or \$429/year for a Premium subscription (which gives you access to all our archives), you can sign up as many people from your church as you want—staff, elders, deacons, lay leaders—anyone from your church, as many as you want.

Just go to www.studyleadership.com and you can upgrade your subscription. Your people will appreciate your investment in them, and you will appreciate having other leaders around you who are also growing their leadership skills. Why don't you go right now, while you are thinking about it? I know how easy it is to let things slide...don't make that mistake!

If you have any questions, please email me at dave@studyleadership.com. I'd be happy to help you get set up.

God Bless,