



# Talent Is Never Enough

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**John C. Maxwell** founded Injoy Stewardship Solutions, a consulting firm that assists churches, and EQUIP, a nonprofit organization that equips Christian leaders to spread the Good News. Maxwell has sold more than 12 million books; his organizations have trained more than a million people. He has spoken to leaders in areas including international government, Fortune 500 companies, and the NFL.

## FOCUSING IN

We live in a talent-obsessed culture. Media, managers, and others fawn over talented people. But talent alone does not ensure success. Only “talent-plus people” -- those whose personal attributes activate, direct, sustain, and protect their talent -- are able to rise to the top.

## INTRODUCTION

While talent is necessary for success, it is never sufficient. Talented people are a dime a dozen, but successful people aren't. In fact, the most successful people aren't necessarily the most talented. More than half of Fortune 500 company CEOs had only C or C-minus averages in college. They have succeeded by using their belief, initiative, focus, perseverance, and character to maximize their innate talent. Nothing is wrong with talent -- we should be inspired by the way others have shaped our world. But we must also separate what talented people do from who they are. Even they have personal failings. Without continued work and strong character, they will lose their advantage.

### **This book is based on three axioms:**

- 1. Everyone has talent.**
- 2. You are most effective focusing on your talent, not compensating for weaknesses.**
- 3. Each person can make choices that add value to his or her talent**

### **In reading this summary, you will learn:**

The 13 key choices you can make to maximize your talent

How to apply positive beliefs to lift your talent

How to recognize “firefighters” who risk putting out your passion, and “firelighters” who give you the energy to keep going

How to summon your internal initiative, instead of relying on others to prod you

How to practice and prepare for opportunities, sharpening and positioning your talent

How to focus your time, thoughts, and actions around your unique mission

How to protect your talent by developing the four aspects of a healthy character

How to develop perseverance by changing your beliefs about success

How to expand your talent by cultivating attitudes of courage and teachability

How teamwork can multiply your talent

## **BELIEF LIFTS YOUR TALENT**

The biggest obstacle to success for most people is their lack of belief in themselves. They don't trust themselves, which results in a self-imposed limitation that creates a ceiling on what they can accomplish. Simply embracing more positive beliefs will help you marshal the resources and inner strength that you need in order to develop your talent.

The following beliefs will lift you to success:

1. Believe in your potential. Most people use only a fraction of their talent and discipline. By fully developing your talent and character, you will be able to create success.
2. Believe you are perfectly capable of fulfilling this potential.
3. Believe your mission is worth achieving. Think about why your goal is important. Pursuing something important empowers and energizes you.

### ***Belief Determines Expectations***

If you want to succeed, focus more on your beliefs than your talent. Some have called it the "sure enough" syndrome. If you expect to fail, sure enough, you will. If you expect to succeed, sure enough, you will. You will experience on the outside what you believe on the inside.

### ***Expectations Determine Actions***

In 20 of the world's most primitive languages, the word for *belief* is the same as the word for *do*. It's only the modern world that has separated them. Our expectations are what brings them back together. We will never live in a way that is inconsistent with our expectations for ourselves.

### ***Actions Determine Results***

That may seem obvious, but many people don't make the connection. They simply hope something good will happen. If you want good results, you need good actions. Good actions come from positive expectations, which start with positive beliefs.

## **PASSION ENERGIZES YOUR TALENT**

Passion will fuel your trip to the top. It will help you take risks and work harder to achieve your goals. It will give you a contagious magnetism and enthusiasm, drawing countless others to your cause.

### ***The Power of Passion***

1. Passion is the first step to achievement: If you love what you do, it shows. If you don't, that shows too. It is difficult to achieve something you don't really desire.
2. Passion increases willpower: Passion turns your "have-to's" into "want-to's". People who want something find the will to make it happen.
3. Passion produces energy: Energy naturally comes to those with passion; people without energy are more likely people without passion.
4. Passion is the foundation for excellence: People work harder, and do better, at the things they care about.
5. Passion is the Key to success: In a survey of executives on what makes people successful, 80% said enthusiasm, not talent.
6. Passion makes a person contagious: Passion is caught, not taught. People are instructed by reason, but inspired by passion.

### ***Firing Up Your Passion***

1. Prioritize your life according to your passion. Make changes so you can pursue what matters most with everything you've got.
2. Protect your passion from detractors, or "firefighters." You can recognize these people when they say things like "It's not in the budget," "It's not practical," "We've never done that before," Spend more of your time with firelighters -- people who encourage your dreams and ignite your passion.
3. Pursue your passion with everything you have

## **INITIATIVE ACTIVATES YOUR TALENT**

While it is a cliché to say that every journey begins with the first step, it's still true. Successful people don't wait for things to be perfect before taking a step—they take initiative and get started.

### ***Insights on Initiative***

1. Initiative is the first step to Anywhere: Your success in life isn't determined by where you start, but by whether you start.

2. Initiative closes the door to fear: We all have fears; the question is whether we control them or they control us
3. Initiative Opens the Door to Opportunity: People who take initiative may succeed or fail, but not taking initiative almost guarantees failure.

Initiative eases life's difficulties: The longer we let things slide, the harder they become. William James said "Nothing is so fatiguing as the hanging on of an uncompleted task."

But in spite of all its benefits, few people have an internal motivation to do the right thing without being told. There are numerous reasons people fail to take initiative:

1. You do not see the consequences of inaction: an unfulfilled life, with a permanent impoverishment of spirit. Do not let your dreams pass you by
2. You are waiting for someone else to motivate you. If you want to get ahead, you need to light your own fire.
3. You are looking for the perfect time to act. But it does not exist. It is better to take a bold step and fail than to spend your whole life deliberating.
4. You spend time fantasizing about the future. But you can only build a better future by making the right choices today -- being productive in the present moment.

### ***Developing Initiative***

1. Accept responsibility for your life. Will yourself to overcome problems, instead of blaming others.
2. Focus on the benefits of completing a task. If it is unnecessary, eliminate it.
3. Ask a friend for emotional support or material assistance in achieving your goal.
4. Break larger tasks into smaller ones. Organize the steps in each task by category (type of work), importance, and sequence, then assign them to others.
5. Give blocks of time to procrastinated tasks. Treat them like a daily appointment. Stop when the allotted time ends.
6. Tie your preparation to action. Plans are worthless unless they lead to the completion of a task.

Neither desire, good intentions, or talent are enough: success requires initiative!

### **FOCUS DIRECTS YOUR TALENT**

Focus does not come naturally to us, yet it is essential for anyone who wants to make the most of his talent. When you are surrounded by opportunities, you must focus on the most important one -- or else you will miss them all. Simply finding a focus and pursuing it is the best way to start.

### ***Facts About Focus***

1. Focus does not come naturally to people, especially in a culture with a myriad of choices and opportunities. The ability to concentrate fully on one thing at a time makes a huge difference.
2. Focus Increases Your Energy: The mind doesn't reach towards achievement until it has clear objectives; then all kinds of untapped resources become available.
3. Focus lifts you: Just by striving to become better, you become elevated. You can't shoot for the stars and remain unaffected by the effort.
4. Focus expands your Life: Narrowing your view widens your perspective and expands your capacity
5. Focus must be intentionally sustained: Staying focused isn't natural—it requires effort, but the payoff is significant

### ***Improving Your Focus***

1. Be intentional. Decide ahead of time what your goal is.
2. Challenge your excuses. Overcome them or find a strategy to work around them.
3. Stay in the present. If your mind wanders to the past, think about what you learned -- and how you can apply that knowledge. If you daydream about the future, bring your attention to the ways present actions will contribute to future success.
4. Stay focused on results, not your tasks' difficulty, or you may get discouraged.
5. Develop and follow your priorities. Concentrate on what is most important.
6. Intentionally spend time developing your strengths.
7. Pick a reward for yourself. Delay it until the job is done.

## **VI. PREPARATION POSITIONS YOUR TALENT**

When you prepare for the future, you position yourself to take advantage of unexpected opportunities. But many people fail to prepare, either because they don't see the value of preparation before action, or they fail to appreciate the value of discipline.

### ***Preparation Principles***

1. Preparation allows you to tap into your talent. Identifying what needs to be done, gathering materials, setting aside time, all enable you to bring your “A game” to the table.
2. Preparation is a process, not an event. It is a continuous developing of your skills, knowledge, and abilities, which add up over time. It isn't just preparing once, but continuously.
3. Preparation Precedes opportunity. If you want to take advantage of your opportunities, you must be prepared when they arise. Once the opportunity presents itself, it is too late to prepare.
4. Preparation for tomorrow begins with the right use of today. If you believe that your success tomorrow depends on your right use of today, you will treat today differently. *Preparing* today means you won't be repairing *tomorrow*!
5. Preparation requires continually good perspective. Understanding the importance of preparation and the difference it makes will motivate you to prepare today for what you may encounter tomorrow.
6. Good preparation leads to action. It is possible to over-prepare to the point of failing to act. Preparation is not about knowing all the answers; it means putting yourself in a better position to succeed.

### ***Preparation in Action***

1. Good preparation always begins with Assessment: Knowing what you should be doing, what it will cost you in time, energy, and resources, what obstacles you will face, and what your limitations are.
2. Alignment: Find a mentor or coach who is better than you who can keep you on track and focused on the right things.
3. Attitude. Visualize success—believe in yourself and what you are doing. Remember that your daily work lays the groundwork for future opportunities.

## **VII. PRACTICE SHARPENS YOUR TALENT**

Consistently good practice leads to consistently good play. Through practice, you learn to improve your performance. Successful people value practice and develop the discipline to do it.

### ***The Power of Practice***

1. Practice Enables Development. We refine old skills and acquire new ones through practice.
2. Practice Leads to Discovery. You can always improve, and by practicing you learn how to get better.

3. Practice Demands Discipline. Developing discipline always begins with a struggle, but once the choice is made, the benefits become evident. People who practice get better; they also develop a winning spirit, one that is unable to surrender.

### ***Five Pillars of Practice***

1. An excellent teacher or coach. Good coaches inspire their students and give tailored instruction. They know whether to offer a pat on the back or a kick in the pants.
2. Your best effort. People don't improve and reach their potential without giving their best.
3. A clear purpose. The best purpose is excellence -- the fulfillment of your own potential. (Excellence is a clearer standard than success, which is based externally.)
4. Your innate potential. The best place to practice is in the area where your greatest potential lies. Maximizing your strengths will always take you further than repairing a weakness.
5. The right resources. Ensure you have the tools that are necessary for your practice.

### ***The Secret to Successful Practice***

The secret can be summed up in the phrase, "a little extra." Doing slightly more than what is required will give you an edge. You must give *a little extra* effort and time; ask for *a little extra* help; and be open to making *a little extra* change in your life. If you do not strive for excellence, you will settle for what is acceptable—and that is the path to mediocrity. Practice with excellence brings success.

## **PERSEVERANCE SUSTAINS YOUR TALENT**

Other attributes affect the timing and quality of your work, but perseverance determines whether you will finish at all. It is needed to release most of life's rewards. If you quit before you finish, it will be as if you never started.

### **Principles of Perseverance**

1. Perseverance means succeeding because you are Determined to, not Destined to.
2. Perseverance recognizes that life is not a marathon. It is many short races in succession. Success consists of an accumulation of daily victories.
3. Perseverance is Needed to Release most of Life's Rewards. It's the last step in the race that counts the most; if you stop before the finish line, the end result is the same as if you never ran a step.
4. Perseverance Draws sweetness out of Adversity. The trials and pressures of life often define us; persevering through difficulty makes you a better person.
5. Perseverance has a compounding Effect on Life. Every day you do the right thing you invest in yourself, and your success compounds over time.

6. Persevering means stopping because you are done, not because you are tired. Perseverance doesn't come into play *until* you are tired.
7. Perseverance doesn't demand more than we have but all that we have. You must bind yourself emotionally, intellectually, physically, and spiritually to your tasks.

### **Five Enemies of Perseverance**

1. A lifestyle of giving up. People who vacillate rarely succeed. Instead, be careful in reaching your decisions, and persistent and determined thereafter.
2. A wrong belief that life should be easy. Research has shown that people who don't expect immediate success are the most successful.
3. A wrong belief that success is a destination. As soon as you think you've arrived, you will stop growing.
4. A lack of resiliency. Some people become dry and brittle; others endeavor to bounce back, no matter how they feel.
5. A lack of vision: Everything you achieve must first be created in your mind's eye. Seeing success there before you achieve it can keep you from quitting.

### **Sustaining Your Talent**

1. Find a Purpose. It is difficult to persevere without a purpose, but when you have one, you can persevere even when facing the most difficult circumstances.
2. Eliminate Excuses: Successful people have a strong sense of responsibility for their own actions.
3. Develop Some Stamina. All successful people have stamina—the will to keep going, no matter the obstacle or their tiredness.

### **COURAGE TESTS YOUR TALENT**

Courage is not only needed in times of crisis; courage is an everyday virtue. Regardless of what your values are, you will need courage to live them out under pressure. To develop and discover our talent, we need courage.

#### **Courage is Tested...**

1. When we seek a truth we know will be painful. A person doesn't know what he's really made of until tested. In order to grow, we need to face truths about ourselves, and that can be difficult

2. When change is needed but inactivity is more comfortable. Growth requires leaving what is known and safe and venturing into the unknown.
3. When our convictions are challenged. People who express their convictions and try to live them out will experience conflict.
4. When learning and growing will display our weakness. Learning something new always involves failure, and possibly looking foolish at first. It takes courage to press through that in order to learn.
5. When we take the high road (and others don't). Treating other people better than they treat us, and forgiving those who wrong us, positions us to grow.
6. When being "out front" makes us an easy target. Leaders are often misunderstood, they have their motives misconstrued, and actions criticized. It takes courage to keep going in that environment.
7. When we face obstacles to our progress. Anytime we want to move forward, obstacles, difficulties and problems are going to get in the way.

### **Becoming a Courageous Person**

Here are some ways you can develop the courage you need to succeed:

1. Find courage by owning your troubles, your fears, and your positive qualities.
2. Grow in courage by doing what is right, not what is expedient.
3. Be conscious that small courageous acts will prepare you for greater ones. After you learn to apologize for hurting someone or for making a mistake, bigger risks will seem less difficult.
4. Recognize that having a leadership position won't give you courage. But regardless of position, showing courage will make you a leader. Your compelling example will encourage others to do the right thing.

You must prove your worth with convictions that are stronger than your fears; vision clear enough that doubts do not cloud it; self-esteem deeper than self-protection; and actions that are more robust than any rationalization. To be a person of courage, you must be willing to trade momentary safety for the achievement of a goal.

### **TEACHABILITY EXPANDS YOUR TALENT**

Highly talented people often have a tough time with teachability. Why? Because they often think they know it all. But teachability is not about competence; it is about attitude. It is the hunger to discover and grow, the desire to listen, learn, and apply.

### **Teachability Truths**

1. Nothing is interesting if you aren't interested. The more engaged you are, the more interesting life is, and the more you will be interested in exploring and learning.
2. Successful people view learning differently. They are always open to new ideas and are willing to learn from anyone.
3. Learning is meant to be a lifelong pursuit. Many people see learning as an event or a season of life, rather than a way of life.
4. Talented people can be the toughest to teach. The things that make you successful are rarely the things that keep you successful.
5. Pride is the biggest hindrance to teachability. Someone who thinks they already know will be unwilling to learn something new.

### **The Problem with Pride**

Pride is such a huge barrier to success and growth that we need to look at it more closely.

1. Pride closes our mind to new ideas.
2. Pride closes our minds to feedback.
3. Pride prevents us from admitting mistakes.
4. Pride keeps us from making needed changes.

### **Overcoming a Pride Problem**

If you have fallen into these prideful pitfalls, there are several things you can do:

1. Admit your pride. Humble yourself; realize that no person is indispensable.
2. Focus your mind on the ways others contribute to your success. Each day, journal about five things you are grateful for.
3. Laugh at yourself. Acknowledge your own foibles, and stop taking yourself seriously.

### **Pursuing Teachability**

If you want to expand your talent, you must become teachable. Here's how:

1. Learn to listen genuinely during conversation. Don't spend your time merely forming judgments or figuring out what to say next.
2. Understand that the learning process is a cycle. Its goal is improved action, not abstract knowledge. The process looks like this:

Act --> Look for mistakes; evaluate --> Search for a better method --> Make changes

3. Plan teachable moments. Look for learning opportunities in every situation. Spend time with people who will expose you to new experiences and leaders you admire.
4. Make your teachable moments count. If you attend a workshop, experience a significant failure, or have another valuable learning experience, work hard to figure out what its lesson is.
5. Question your own teachability, and be mindful of habits that can interfere. Be open to other people's ideas, listen more than you talk, admit when you are wrong, observe before you act on a situation, ask questions, and listen openly for the truth.

## **CHARACTER PROTECTS YOUR TALENT**

Those who lack strong character rarely stay in the limelight for long. They are tempted to take shortcuts, and their character faults topple them. But with good character, you can protect your talent by avoiding common weaknesses.

### **The Components of Character**

1. Self-discipline: The ability to do what is right, even when you don't feel like it. Without it, your undeveloped gifts will languish as you pursue fleeting pleasures.
2. Core values: Our core values are the principles we live by every day. They define what we believe and how we live
3. A sense of identity: Everyone must answer the question "Who am I?" The answer often provides the motivation for self-discipline.
4. Integrity: In common parlance, we use this word to mean "honesty." But it is more accurate to see integrity as an alignment of your values, thoughts, feelings and actions. This kind of consistency will make your leadership, and your vision, more compelling.

### **Character Communicates**

1. Character Communicates Consistency. We can say anything we like, but our actions determine the message others receive.
2. Character Communicates Choices. Character is the sum total of all our everyday choices.
3. Character Communicates Influence. Today many people try to demand respect, but respect (and influence) must be earned over time, and they are developed by character.
4. Character Communicates Longevity. If you want to know how long it takes to get to the top, consult a calendar. If you want to know how long it takes to fall to the bottom, consult a

stopwatch. Character determines whether you rise or fall, and provides the opportunity for longevity.

## Developing Character

Talent is a gift, but character is a choice. To develop character:

1. Don't give up or give in to adversity. It takes character to weather life's storms; at the same time, adversity develops character.
2. Do the right thing. It's not easy to do the right thing when doing the wrong thing is expedient.
3. Take control of your life. People with weak character blame their circumstances. Circumstances are beyond your control, but your character is not. Your character is always your choice.

## RELATIONSHIPS INFLUENCE YOUR TALENT

To find your greatest potential, you must surround yourself with people who encourage you --- not those who drain you or knock you down. Nothing will influence your talent as much as the important relationships in your life.

### The Direction Relationships Take Us

The relationships in our lives really do make or break us; they lift us up or tear us down.

Some relationships take from us. Note whether a person makes you feel better or worse about yourself, and how much energy the relationship requires. Does it feel like it sucks the life out of you?

In his book *High Maintenance Relationships*, Les Parrott identified some of the types of people who take from us:

- Critics*- constantly complain or give unwanted advice
- Wet Blankets*- are pessimistic and habitually negative
- Gossips*- spread rumors and leak secrets.
- Control Freaks*- are unable to let go and let things be
- Backstabbers*- are irrepressibly two-faced

Some Relationships add to us. They make us better; they energize, inspire, and validate us. We should view the people in these relationships as friends and value them highly.

Some Relationships Are Pivotal to Our Lives. Over the course of a lifetime we are in contact with thousands of people, most of whom have little impact on us. A few have tremendous impact and change the course of our lives; they are pivotal to who we are and what we do.

## Five Signs of a Solid Relationship

1. Mutual Enjoyment
2. Respect
3. Shared Experiences
4. Trust
5. Reciprocity

## Developing Your Relationships

1. Identify the most important people in your life. Who do you spend the most time with? Whose opinions matter most to you?
2. Assess the direction they are influencing you in. Once you know *who* is influencing you, the question becomes *how* are they influencing you?
3. How do they behave towards me in difficult times? Do they kick you while you are down, or pick you up and help you keep going?

Choose your relationships wisely—they will define you and influence your talent.

## RESPONSIBILITY STRENGTHENS YOUR TALENT

Author Michael Korda said, "In the final analysis, the one quality that all successful people have...is the ability to take on responsibility." Responsibility lifts talent to a new level and increases its stamina.

### The Strength of Responsibility

We live in a culture that overvalues talent and undervalues responsibility. Responsibility strengthens talent and increases the opportunity for long-term success. Here's how:

1. Responsibility Provides the Foundation of Success. Taking on responsibility requires sacrifice, but it also brings tremendous rewards.
2. Responsibility, handled correctly, leads to more responsibility.
3. Responsibility Maximizes Ability and Opportunity. Accepting responsibility causes us to take action and make things happen.
4. Responsibility, over time, builds a solid reputation. People discover they can trust and depend on you.

If you want others to trust you, give you more opportunities to develop, and to partner with you, embrace responsibility.

## Becoming Responsible

Becoming responsible is about taking a series of small steps, that add up to a big difference:

1. Start where you are. There is nowhere else to start! Don't dream about what you'll do "someday" when the situation is right.
2. Choose your friends wisely. It's hard to be responsible if the people around you aren't
3. Stop blaming others. Theodore Roosevelt said, "Do what you can with what you have, where you are."
4. Learn Responsibilities Major Lessons:
  - Gaining success means practicing self-discipline
  - What you start, finish
  - Know when others are depending on you
  - Don't expect others to step in for you.
5. Make tough decisions and stand by them.
6. Live Beyond Yourself. Take responsibility beyond yourself by serving others.

## TEAMWORK MULTIPLIES YOUR TALENT

Everyone has gaps and blind spots in their talent. But by partnering with others who have strengths where you have weaknesses, you can multiply your talent by a hundredfold. If you want to do something *really* big, do it as part of a team.

### Truths About Teamwork

Teamwork not only allows a person to do what he couldn't otherwise do; it also has a compounding effect on all he has—including his talent. Whatever your vision or desire, teamwork makes the dream work.

1. Teamwork Divides the Effort and Multiplies the Effect. You get more resources, more ideas, and more energy -- generating multiple ways to meet a need or reach a goal. Developing a team can be difficult in the beginning, which is why some people are reluctant to engage, the rewards on the back end are tremendous.
2. Talent wins games, but Teamwork Wins championships. If you want to perform at the highest possible level, you need to be part of a team.
3. Teamwork is not about you. All great teams are the result of their players making decisions based on what's best for the rest.

4. Great teams create community. On good teams, trust is a non-negotiable. Effective teams create an environment where relationships grow, people are connected, and trust develops.
5. Adding value to Others Adds Value to You. People who take advantage of others inevitably fail; if you want to succeed, *add value to others*.

### Choosing Teamwork

1. Realize that one is too small a number to achieve greatness. To maximize your potential, multiply your talent by working in a team.
2. Include a team in your dream. Teamwork gives you the best opportunity to turn your vision into reality. If your vision is unclear, get on a team and then find your best place in it. Let the experience guide you.
3. Develop your team. If you are a leader, recognize your teammates' potential. Help develop their abilities.
4. Give the credit for Success to the team. Instead of being proud of your own success, recognize the role of others' work. People work better when their contributions are recognized.

### THE LAST WORD ON TALENT

Now that you know the steps you need to take to maximize your God-given talent, you can do the necessary work to become a talent-plus person. Doing this will add value to your and others' lives. You will be able to give your talent back to the world and to God, and accomplish more than you ever dreamed possible.

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### KEY QUOTES

"When people achieve great things, others often explain their accomplishments by simply attributing everything to talent. But that is a false and misleading way of looking at success. If talent alone is enough, then why do you and I know highly talented people who are not highly successful?" (p. 1)

"Intelligence, imagination, and knowledge are essential resources, but only effectiveness converts them into results." -- Peter Drucker (p. 1)

"The giftedness is usually greater than the person." -- Fred Smith (p. 5)

"Natural talent is one of life's greatest gifts. But the advantage it gives lasts only a short while. If (you) merely wing it, others will soon fly past (you)." (pp. 5-6)

"The key choices you make -- apart from the natural talent you already have -- will set you apart from others who have talent alone." (p. 7)

"Life is playing the hand you have been dealt well. That is determined by your choices." (p. 10)

"The first and greatest obstacle to success for most people is their belief in themselves." (p. 11)

"Your beliefs control everything you do. Accomplishment is more than a matter of working harder or smarter. It's also a matter of believing positively." (p. 23)

"A belief is more than an idea that a person possesses. It is an idea that possesses a person." (p. 24)

"If you want good results, you need to perform good actions. If you want to perform good actions, you must have positive expectations. To have positive expectations, you have to first believe." (p. 27)

"A passionate person with limited talent will outperform a passive person who possesses greater talent. Passionate people act with boundless enthusiasm, and they just keep on going!" (p. 35)\_

"What do you want to accomplish in your lifetime? How do you want to focus your energy: on survival, success, or significance? We live in a time and place with too many opportunities for survival alone. And there's more to life than mere success. We need to dream big." (p. 44)

"Nothing is so fatiguing as the hanging on of an uncompleted task." -- William James (p. 53)

"It is easy to dodge our responsibilities, but we cannot dodge the consequences of dodging our responsibilities." -- Sir Josiah Stamp (p.56)

As managers, we can understand this advice: "You don't motivate people. What you do is hire motivated people, then make sure you don't demotivate them." -- Tom Golisano (p. 57)

"One is too small a number to achieve greatness." (p. 61)

"People who are undecided about what they want to do or where they want to go cannot tap into their strength of will -- or their talent. As a result, they will merely drift along." (p. 75)

"There's an old saying that if you chase two rabbits, both will escape. Unfortunately that is what many people seem to do. They don't focus their attention, and as a result, they become ineffective. Perhaps the reason is that people in our culture have too many choices -- nearly unlimited options." (pp. 78-79)

"If you do little things well, the big ones tend to take care of themselves." -- Dale Carnegie (p. 110)

"Success is a little like wrestling a gorilla. You don't quit when you're tired -- you quit when the gorilla is tired." -- Robert Strauss (p. 133)

"Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at its testing point." -- C.S. Lewis (p. 147)

"The opposite of courage isn't cowardice; it's conformity. It's not enough just to believe in something. We need to live for something." (p. 154)

"(Leadership is) the expression of courage that compels people to do the right thing." -- Jim Mellado (p. 163)

"Many people with talent make it into the limelight, but the ones who have neglected to develop strong character rarely stay there long. Absence of strong character eventually topples talent. Talented people are sometimes tempted to take shortcuts. Character prevents that. Talented people may feel superior and expect special privileges. Character helps them to know better." (p. 191)

"If you want to do something really big, then do it as part of a team." (p. 255)



## From the Pastor's Perspective

With *Talent Is Never Enough*, John Maxwell has hit another home run! The only problem with the book is that there is so much good stuff in it that it is like trying to take a sip out of an open fire hydrant.

The issue he raises is hugely applicable to church life. Pastors need to make developing their talent a priority, and it is all too easy to neglect that. To some it seems selfish; to others it seems impossible to find time for it, with all the demands we already have. But we need to change that kind of thinking!

In the ministry, or in any position of leadership, it is absolutely necessary, *for the sake of the people around us*, that we develop our talents. We will never learn how to help others develop their talents if we don't develop ours; we also become a ceiling for them. When we stop growing, our church or organization stops growing. We can't lead people past where we are!

This is one of the reasons churches grow stale and stop having the impact God intends. When pastors or leaders stop growing, eventually they run out of things to give their flock, and simply re-package old lessons. Our people deserve more. The gospel deserves more. It isn't selfish to develop your own talents; it enables you to be a bigger blessing, a bigger resource, to those God has entrusted to your care.

A different side of this is also important. Pastors can sometimes be intimidated by talented people, and either give them greater influence or place than they should have, or not give them place because they are threatened by their abilities. While appreciating talent, you need to look past that to the character underneath it. Develop talent, yes—but don't be intimidated by it. Look for people who combine talent with character, teachability, humility, etc. Those people are gold.