



20 SIMPLE Leaderships Lessons *That Will* UNLOCK YOUR LIFE

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I am fortunate to work for an organization that has allowed me to spend the last 25 years traveling the world consulting with major corporations and helping employees to succeed. Throughout this journey, I have spoken with thousands of groups and from each, people have shared their experiences, insights and wisdom. I have done my best to collect their stories, to learn from their struggles and from their triumphs. However, I knew the day would come when all of this wisdom would serve an even higher purpose.

So here's the best wisdom, the simple leadership lessons that others have shared that will change everything:

- Everyone has something that is interesting about them, and everyone has something they can teach you. Practice figuring out what it is. It will help you learn about a broad array of topics (which makes for a good conversationalist) and it will draw people to you.
- If there's a problem, you're the problem. Lamenting, complaining, blaming others or getting frustrated about problems, solves nothing. All that matters is how are you going to solve the issue or work around the problem. Victims never win, so why be one.
- Talk to strangers - rapport building skills are vastly underrated. If you get comfortable making conversation with strangers it will serve you well for the rest of your life. Remember, your best friends were at one point strangers, so talk to more people, you never know which one will become your new best friend.
- Travel and experience as much as you possibly can. Learn about the people, their lifestyles, food and traditions. Don't look for the familiar, embrace the things that are different, you will be glad that you did.
- Get comfortable with the idea of being uncomfortable. Most people strive to stay in their comfort zones. Highly successful people realize that everything great happens when you get out of your comfort zones.
- Fail more. If you never fail, you're not trying hard enough. Recognize that failure is a reflection of your actions and not your self-worth.
- Learn to *really* listen. Most people will hear the first few words someone is saying and then start thinking about what they want to say as soon as that person shuts up. Great listeners train themselves to be mentally quiet when some else is speaking.

- Learn to forgive - and really mean it. Throughout your life many people will do things that bother you. Learn to forgive them, in most cases their slights happened out of ignorance rather than malice.
- Set goals and stay focused on them. Aristotle talked about the fact that happiness comes when we feel like we are growing and developing. There is no better way to do this than goal direction.
- You have an unlimited ability to learn and you can steer it in any direction. So don't sell yourself short. Just plan on practicing more than you think you need to.
- In everything you do there will be five to seven true High Payoff Activities (HPAs). If you focus on these five to seven things you will always be more successful. Peak performers in life don't do everything, they just do the right things, consistently. In everything you do that matters, figure out the five to seven HPAs. To do this, just study the people who are getting the best results, what are they focusing their time on? Once you've defined these, practice getting good at them.
- It's okay to be scared. Everybody has fears. Move forward anyway. In most cases what you fear will never happen.
- Find out what is most important to the people around you and help them achieve it. This one will help you advance in every relationship you will ever develop both personally and professionally.
- Cherish relationships more than money. Relationships last longer.
- Everything in life is cumulative. Rarely does one thing matter, however, cumulatively things matter a great deal. So be aware, in every decision you make, in every action you take, you are either building positive momentum or negative momentum. Build enough of either and things begin to change dramatically.
- There will be times when you feel hurt, heartbroken, disappointed, sad and depressed. Remember what it is like to feel these things, it will make your good times feel all that much sweeter. To experience the greatest of highs, you must have the contrast of the lows.
- Every job, no matter how menial you may think it is, can teach you some valuable skill and life lesson. Don't grumble that the job seems beneath you, look for the skills and lessons. They will be far more valuable than what you are getting paid.
- It is always in the "want to" that people discover the "how to". The more clearly you can see why something is important to you, the benefits you will gain, the opportunities that will open up, the more motivation you will have to take action. Most people only focus on *how* to do something, you will be infinitely more successful if you focus on *why* you *want* to do something.
- Find out the biggest problem that your boss is having at work and offer to help find a solution. You can't make it worse and you just might make it better. Either way, your boss will see you as a "can do" person.
- Talk less and reflect more. Set aside time every day just to think. Look at those areas that are working in your life and those that are not. Don't delay, make changes in the areas that are not working.
- Figure out the type of person you want to be. What characteristics do you want people to respect about you?
- Be nice to everyone you work with, you never know if they will be someone you will be working for later – or they may know someone you will be working for.
- You are going to be working with a lot of people. Some will come from different social and financial backgrounds. Others will have grown up with vastly different family dynamics. These different experiences

will provide them varied perspectives. Appreciate the differences and work to understand their perspective. Embracing the diversity in people is a great asset.

- Most important of all, pay close attention to what you think about. More than two thousand years ago, Gautama Buddha said, *“What you think you become.”* Focus on, think about, dominate your mind with thoughts that lead you in the direction you want to go in life. Weed out those negative, self-limiting thoughts, they don’t serve you, they shackle you.

Okay, yes, I realize that there are more than 20 lessons listed. Consider the extra lessons, bonus lessons. I can’t claim that this is an all-inclusive list (*in fact, if you are reading this and have a great life lesson, please feel free to add it to the comments below so others can benefit*), however, it does encompass most of the major areas of life and will set a powerful framework to build upon.

As human beings, we seem to have some innate tendency to want to complicate things. The late founder of Apple, Steve Jobs, said, *“Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.”* Embrace these simple lessons and you will be amazed at how life will begin to open up for you.