

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT



10 tips

Aspiring Managers and Leaders

INTRODUCTION

“Management is about position. Leadership is about purpose”. You will hear me mention the name John C. Maxwell throughout this course. Maxwell speaks about leadership and is famous for his inspirational quotes and speeches on leadership. One of the main points Maxwell gets across is that it’s tough to be in the people business when people don’t like you.



Step 1:

Build Self-Awareness

Start this leadership journey by becoming a little bit more self-aware as to whether you are about position, authority and rules, or about purpose. Do you live with a sense of clear direction of where you're headed and do you live according to a set of values that gives you purpose. Your challenge, be it in your work life or personal life is to find your purpose.

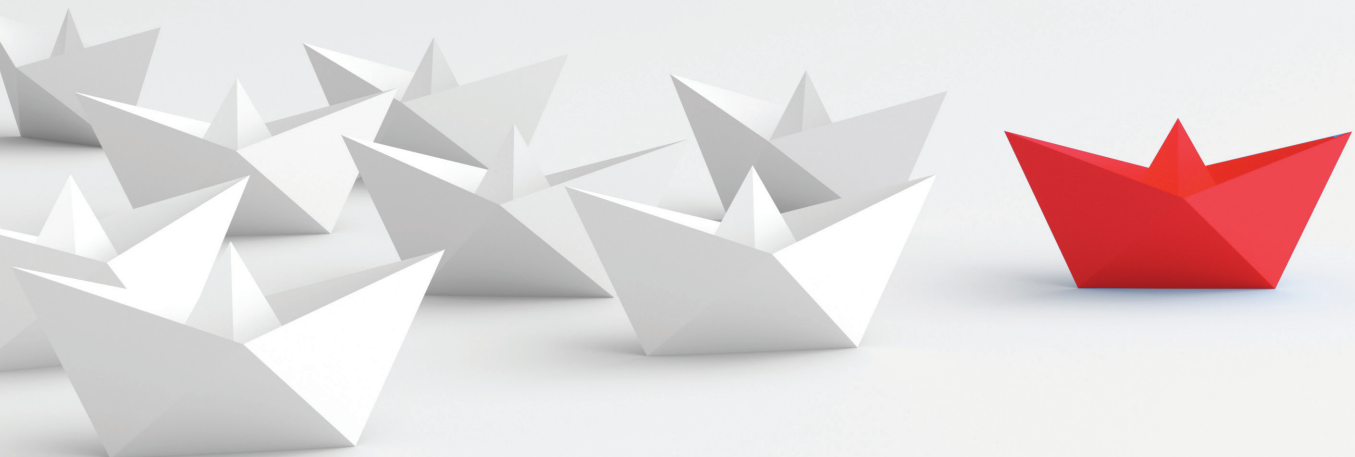
Step 2:

Think about change

There are three questions that you as aspiring leaders can ask yourselves.

1. Where are you looking to anticipate the next change in your work and life?
2. Who are you spending time with?
3. What topics are coming up for discussion?

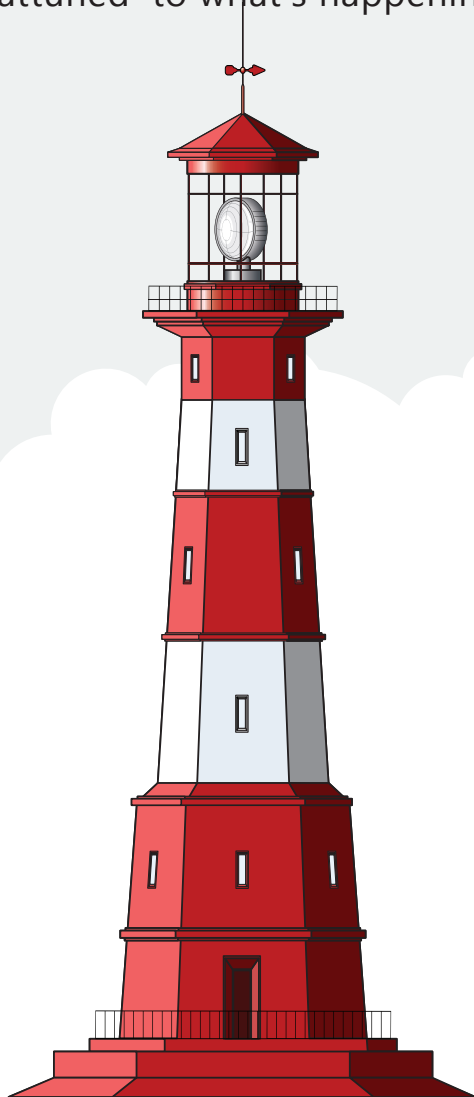
The mark of a leader according to Rosalinde Torres is that great leaders find a way to distill these questions and gain insight to understand potential discontinuities and ask the tough questions about how prepared you are for the next change that's coming.



Step 3:

Scan your environment

Leaders have an uncanny way of adapting and changing course. They can come to decisions based around what's happening in the environment they are working in. Ron Heifetz refers to the need for leaders to be constantly scanning their environment for signs of change. They then mobilize "the community" to tackle these tough problems, which Heifetz calls "adaptive challenges". As aspiring leaders, you need to develop the ability to understand the business challenges that your company faces, the key business drivers impacting your business, the technology that is changing how your customers interact with your business, and, the regulatory environment in which you operate. As you build your awareness on these strategic drivers you become more attuned to what's happening around you.



Step 4:

Understand your culture

Maxwell talks about how company culture is the collective behaviour of the employees. Culture is the company's personality and it should smack you right in the face. It is tangible and, because it's about behaviors, it can change. Leaders create winning cultures by first building the vision, values and purpose from which all else flows.

Step 5:

Learn to communicate

Leaders communicate at all levels, across all boundaries, and departments. They know that information does not reside in the positions of authority but across the network. During times of change leaders are compelled to spread the vision of the future and build a collaborative culture that breaks down siloed thinking.



Step 6:

Diversity Matters

Leaders tend to build a diverse network around them. This diversity of talent enables them to receive different perspectives and prevents leaders from stagnating. They understand that what got you here may not get you to where you need to be.

Step 7:

Become a coach

Leaders recognize that leadership needs to be cultivated across the whole company. By investing time with aspiring leaders, they guide, mentor and help them reflect on the issues of the day and how to help employees overcome challenges, not by presenting solutions but by steering them to find alternative solutions themselves. Coaching for a leader matters because companies that have coaching and development programs tend to:

- Create a high-performance culture.
- Optimise employees' performance.
- Inspire and cultivate collaborative work environments.
- Commit to coaching others to top performance.



Step 8:

Vision, Values and Purpose

Leaders live their mission. What's important for aspiring leaders is that you learn how to create your mission from your vision, values and purpose.

- A Mission Statement defines the company's business, its objectives and its approach to reach those objectives.
- A Vision Statement describes the desired future position of the company.
- A Purpose expresses the organisation's impact on the lives of customers.
- Values are the organisation's essential and enduring tenets. They are a small set of general guiding principles; not to be compromised for short-term financial gain or expediency. Values are the proven, enduring guidelines for human conduct.



Step 9:

Help others to grow

Leaders do not just grow themselves, they also invest their time and resources developing those around them. By building high performance teams, leaders understand that developing talent matters. They create a pipeline of potential talent that will carry on the leader's vision and be successful leaders in their own right.



Step 10:

Be authentic

Leadership is about being oneself. Leaders walk the talk and are humble. They lead by inspiring others into action. They create space for others to develop. They learn to fail quickly, create supportive environments and the conditions to succeed. Ultimately, they are just themselves.

Conclusion

Leaders are those who generally set direction, build an inspiring vision, and create something new. Leaders take you where you need to go to be successful as a team or an organisation. It is a dynamic, exciting, and inspiring journey. As aspiring leaders you too have the ability to grow and become such a leader.





"A great leader's courage to fulfill his vision
comes from passion, not position".

John C. Maxwell