The 360’ Leader

John C. Maxwell

2005 by Maxwell Motivation and JAMAX Realty

**Section I: The Myths of Leading from the Middle of an Organization**

* “Ninety-nine percent of all leadership occurs not from the top but from the middle of an organization.” 1

Myth 1: The Position Myth: “I can’t lead if I am not at the top.” 4

* “Leadership is a choice you make, not a place you sit.” 7
* “Influencing others is a matter of disposition, not position.” 7

Myth 2: The Destination Myth: “When I get to the top, then I’ll learn to lead.” 8

* “John Wooden said, “When opportunity comes, it’s too late to prepare.” If you want to be a successful leader, learn to lead before you have a leadership position.”” 9

Myth 3: The Influence Myth: “If I were on top, then people would follow me.” 10

* “You may be able to grant someone a position, but you cannot grant him real leadership. Influence must be earned.” 11

Myth 4: The Inexperience Myth: “When I get to the top, I’ll be in control.” 12

Myth 5: The Freedom Myth: “When I get to the top, I’ll no longer be limited.” 14

* “In many organizations, as you move up the ladder, you may even find that the amount of responsibility you take on increases faster than the amount of authority you receive.” 15

Myth 6: The Potential Myth: “I can’t reach my potential if I’m not the top leader.” 17

* “I believe that people should strive for the top of their game, not the top of the organization.” 17

Myth 7: The All-or-Nothing Myth: “If I can’t get to the top, then I won’t try to lead.” 19

**Section II: The Challenges 360-Degree Leaders Face**

Challenge 1: The Tension Challenge: The Pressure of Being Caught in the Middle 25

* “Good leaders rarely think in terms of boundaries; instead they think in terms of opportunities.” 27
* “Comfort is really a function of expectations. The wider the gap between what you imagine to be and reality, the more disappointed you are likely to be.” 30
* “Trust is built one block at a time, but when it is violated the entire wall comes crashing down.” – David Branker 32

Challenge 2: The Frustration Challenge: Following an Ineffective Leader 34

* “Insecure leaders think everything is about them, and as a result, every action, every piece of information, every decision is put through their filter of self-centeredness.” 36
* “No matter what our circumstances, our greater limitation isn’t the leader above us, it’s the spirit within us.” 40
* “Some people fear that if they say positive things about an ineffective leader they work for, they will be misleading others. Or they worry that others will think they have poor judgment. But other people are aware of an ineffective leader’s limitations, and as long as your affirmation is truthful and focuses on your leader’s strengths, it won’t reflect badly on you.” 42

Challenge 3: The Multi-Hat Challenge: One Head . . .Many Hats 43

* “It’s ironic that to become leaders, people must be able to do many things, well, but in order to become leaders at the top, they must do fewer things with great excellence.” 45
* “Some people love a new challenge and thrive on the rapidly changing demands and nature of leadership in the middle of an organization.” 49

Challenge 4: The Ego Challenge: You’re Often Hidden in the Middle 50

* “True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever the cost.” Arthur Ashe 51
* “We can often become so focused on our dreams and goals that we lose sight of the responsibilities right in front of us.” 52
* “If we focus on being some other place because we think it’s better, then we will neither enjoy where we are nor do what we must to succeed.” 53

Challenge 5: The Fulfillment Challenge: Leaders Like the Front More Than the Middle 56

* “Leaders at the front don’t have the freedom to neglect what their position allows them to see.” 58
* “The more you effectively fulfill your role as a leader in the middle, the more fulfilled you will be.” 62

Challenge 6: The Vision Challenge: Championing the Vision Is More Difficult When You Didn’t Create It 64

* “Even though your own vision may excite you more than someone else’s, to get the opportunity to pursue your own dreams, you will almost certainly have to succeed in achieving the dreams of others.” 64
* “Leaders don’t like change any more than followers do – unless, of course, it’s their idea!” 65
* “If people disagree with the vision, it’s often because they have a problem with the person who casts it.” 66

Challenge 7: The Influence Challenge: Leading Others Beyond Your Position Is Not Easy 73

* “360-Degree Leaders work to change their thinking from, I want a position that will make people follow me to, I want to become a person whom people will want to follow.” 74

**Section III: The Principles 360-Degree Leaders Practice to Lead Up**

* “If you want to get ahead, leading up is much better than kissing up.” - Dan Reiland 81

Lead-Up Principle 1: Lead Yourself Exceptionally Well 84

* “The key to leading yourself well is to learn self-management.” 85
* “Good leaders know when to display emotions and when to delay them.” 87
* “The greatest enemy of good thinking is busyness.” 90
* “A minute of thinking is often more valuable than an hour of talk or unplanned work.” 91

Lead-Up Principle 2: Lighten Your Leader’s Load 94

* The lift you give for the leader often leads to the leader lifting you.” 98
* Lift the Load
  + Can I say something that you have said before to give you another voice?
  + Can I say something that you would like to say but can’t, to give you a needed voice?
  + Can I say something that you haven’t said yet to give you the first voice?

Lead-Up Principe 3: Be Willing to Do What Others Won’t 104

* “Few things gain the appreciation of a top leader more quickly than an employee with a whatever-it-takes attitude.” 104
* “You learn resiliency and tenacity during tough assignments, not easy ones. When tough choices have to be made and results are difficult to achieve, leaders are forged.” 105
* “You don’t have the right to put the organization on the line . . . If you are going to take a risk, you need to put yourself on the line.” 107
* “It’s easier to move from failure to success than from excuses to success.” 108
* 1st person to volunteer is a hero and is given the “10” treatment
* 2nd person is considered a helper and viewed as only slightly above average
* 3rd, along with everyone after, is seen as a follower and is ignored.

Lead-Up Principle 4: Do More Than Manage – Lead! 112

* “Leaders must be good managers, but most managers are not necessarily good leaders.” –Tom Mullins 113
* “Most people evaluate events in their lives according to how they will be personally affected. Leaders think within a broader context.” 114
* “Trust your hunches. They’re usually based on facts filed away just below the conscious level.” –Joyce Brothers 117

Lead-Up Principle 5: Invest in Relational Chemistry 119

* “Each time another person in the organization embraced the vision and passes it on, it’s like giving the vision “fresh legs.”
* “Promote your leader’s dreams, and he will promote you.”

Lead-Up Principle 6: Be Prepared Every Time You Take Your Leader’s Time 126

* “One of the best ways to save time is to think and plan ahead; five minutes of thinking can often save an hour of work.” 127

Lead-Up Principle 7: Know When to Push and When to Back Off 134

* “Every leader in the middle of an organization knows things that the boss doesn’t. Not only is that normal, but it’s also good. There are times when you may know something your boss doesn’t, but you need to communicate it to her because it can hurt the organization or her.” 137
* Can I help my boss win?
  + Go back to when you discovered your leader’s heartbeat and priorities. 139
* “Successful leaders make the fight move at the right moment with the right motive.” 139
* “But it’s one thing to communicate and another to coerce your leader. The choice your leader makes is not your responsibility. Besides, if you have made your point clearly, you are unlikely to help your cause by continuing to hammer away at it with your leader. …If you keep repeating yourself after your point’s been made, you’re just trying to get your own way.” 140

Lead-Up Principle 8: Become a Go-To Player 145

* “Go-to players are the people who find a way to make things happen no matter what. They don’t have to be in familiar surroundings. They don’t have to be I their comfort zones.” 146
* “If you have the willingness and capacity to lift the load of your leaders when they need it, you will have influence with them.” 148

Lead-Up Principle 9: Be Better Tomorrow Than You Are Today 150

* “The key to personal development is being more growth oriented than goal oriented.” 151
* “If you’re not moving forward as a learner, then you are moving backward as a leader.” 152

**Section IV: The Principles 360 Degree Leaders Practice to Lead Across**

Lead-Across Principle 1: Understand, Practice, and Complete the Leadership Loop 161

* “People always move toward someone who increases them and away from anyone who decreases them.” 162
* “Few things increase the credibility of leaders more than adding value to the people around them.” 165
* “Great leaders don’t use people so that they can win. They lead people so that they all can win together.” 167

Lead-Across Principle 2: Put Completing Fellow Leaders Ahead of Competing with Them 169

* “Winning at all costs will cost you when it comes to your peers.” 170
* “The whole goal of healthy competition is to leverage it for the corporate win.” 173

Lead-Across Principle 3: Be a Friend 175

* “Your best friend is he who brings out the best that is within you.” -Henry Ford 179

Lead-Across Principle 4: Avoid Office Politics 181

* “Great people talk about ideas, average people talk about themselves, and small people talk about others.” 184

Lead-Across Principle 5: Expand Your Circle of Acquaintances 189

* “To get outside of your comfort zone, why not start with those in your comfort zone? Every friend you have has a friend you don’t have.” 192

Lead-Across Principle 6: Let the Best Idea Win 197

* “If you desire to become a 360-Degree Leader, then you need to resist the temptation to fight for your idea when it’s not the best idea.” 198

Lead-Across Principle 7: Don’t Pretend You’re Perfect 205

**Section V: The Principles 360-Degree Leaders Practice to Lead Down**

Lead-Down Principle 1: Walk Slowly Through the Halls 213

* “To connect with people, you travel at their speed.” 214
* “Leaders who tend only to business often end up losing the people and the business.” 218

Lead-Down Principle 2: See Everyone As a “10” 220

* “When it comes to improving in skills, I believe that most people cannot increase their ability beyond about two points on a scale of 1 to 10. So, for example, if you were born a 4 when it comes to math, no matter how hard you work at it, you will probably never become better than a 6. But here’s the good news. Everybody is exceptional at something, and a 10 doesn’t always look the same.” 225
* “People usually rise to the leader’s expectations – if they like the leader.” 226
* 1 – build people up be encouragement
* 2 – give people credit by acknowledgement
* 3 – give people recognition by gratitude

Lead-Down Principle 3: Develop Each Team Member as a Person 228

* “When you equip people, you teach them how to do a job. When you develop them, you are helping them to improve as individuals.” 230
* “You cannot give what you do not have. In order to develop your staff, you need to keep growing yourself.” 230
* “Ignore what a man desires and you ignore the very source of his power.” – Walter Lippmann 231

Lead-Down Principles 4: Place People in Their Strength Zones 237

Lead-Down Principles 5: Model the Behavior You Desire 242

* “What’s worse than training your people and losing them? Not training them and keeping them.” 245
* “When it comes to trust, the only passing grade is 100 percent. If people can’t trust you all of the time, then they will consider you untrustworthy.” 245

Lead-Down Principles 6: Transfer the Vision 248

* “Though leaders in the middle may not always be the inventors of the vision, they are almost always its interpreters.”
* “When preparing to cast vision, ask: What do I want them to know, and what do I want them to do?” 249
* “Although vision tells people where they need to go, purpose tells them why they should go.” 250
* “If there is no passion in the picture, then your vision isn’t transferable.” 252

Lead-Down Principles 7: Reward for Results 254

* “Whatever actions leaders reward will be repeated.” 255
* “It’s okay to let those you lead outshine you, for if they shine brightly enough, they reflect positively on you.” -Bill Hornsby 255
* “Any business or industry that pays equal rewards to its goof-offs and its eager beavers sooner or later will find itself with more goof-offs than eager beavers.” - Mick Delaney 257

**Section VI: The Value of 360-Degree Leader**

Value 1: A Leadership Team Is More Effective Than Just One Leader 265

* “For teams to develop at every level, they need leaders at every level.” 265
* “No amount of personal competency compensates for personal insecurity.” – Wayne Schmidt 267
* “Immature leaders lead first, then listen afterward.” 267

Value 2: Leaders Are Needed At Every Level of the Organization 269

* “Not all good decision makers are leaders, but all good leaders are decision makers.” 270
* Without A Leader –
  + Agendas are Multiplied
  + Conflicts are extended
  + Morale is Low
  + Production is reduced
  + Success is difficult

Value 3: Leading Successfully at One Level Is a Qualifier for Leading at the Next Level 274

* “I’ve never known a person focused on yesterday to have a better tomorrow.” 275
* “The only conquests which are permanent and leave no regrets are our conquests over ourselves.” -Napoleon Bonaparte 276

Value 4: Good Leaders in the Middle Make Better Leaders at the Top 279

* “Great leaders anywhere in an organization make better leaders at the top.” 280

Value 5: 360-Degree Leaders Possess Qualities Every Organization Needs 285

* “Blessed are the flexible, for they will not be bent out of shape.” 286
* “Leadership is seeing opportunity in tough times.” 287
* “The true measure of leaders is not the number of people who serve them but the number of people they serve.” 289