We have already looked at the characteristics of a disciple. All leaders have to be disciples first and modeling the roles of a disciple, whether gifted in those areas or not. I may not have the gift of hospitality but that does not mean that I do not walk in the role of being hospitable. I may not have the gift of evangelism but that does not exempt me from stepping out and taking the risk regularly to share my faith.

If we define leadership widely, leaders can be viewed as those who intentionally step out to make other disciples. In that sense, we are all called to be leaders since we are all to be making disciples. If, however, we define leadership narrowly, as those who do the above but also have 1) a vision by God to challenge the status quo by advancing the kingdom in some specific way and 2) the ability to get others to fulfill the vision with them (Malphurs and Man-cini 2004). It is my contention, therefore, that all are called to be disciples, but not all are called or equipped to be leaders. Some may have vision but can’t get anyone to follow. Some have charismatic personalities but aren’t going anywhere; their leadership potential is wasted for lack of vision.

Some people seem to have leadership “on them” at an early age, first demonstrating natural ability but later accompanied by spiritual gifts for leadership. This would clearly be the case with Paul, who we see having leadership ability even before his salvation. Others are thrust into leadership, usually unwillingly, and then given abilities from God along the way. Esther was given leadership “for such a time as this,” to quote how Mordecai explained her unique leadership role in Israel’s history. So was...
Moses. Either way, I remember Howard Hendricks saying on an audio cassette many years ago that if someone says, “I am a leader,” they need to be asked questions, “What do you want?” (vision) and “Where are your men?” (followership).

Leadership, then, may be upon someone, as evidenced by vision and followership, but these need to be accompanied by other components. As the leader passes God’s many and varied obedience tests, he/she will come out with certain character traits that lay the foundation for a life of integrity, the most important of all leadership components. Finally, vision, followership, and character need to be accompanied by competency. If the fledgling leader is incompetent, either due to the lack of training, the lack of emotional intelligence (see below) or abilities, either natural or supernatural, he/she will not be able to get the job done. To raise up leaders, then, we need to look at four core qualities:

- vision-casting
- followership
- character
- competency

Kouzes and Posner’s classic study (2002) affirms these four principles but with different language and in a different order of causation. Their research has shown that:

- Integrity creates true, moral authority and legitimate power from which a culture of trust can be built.
- Vision into the future shows the way forward for the organization.
- Core competencies demonstrate that the leader has the skill-set and training to get the job done.
- Inspirational leaders build the esprit de corps of the group and enhance success toward the vision for the future.

Whether paradigm is used, once these four identifying markers are in evidence, it is a matter of God’s timing and release into the ministry the leader is being called into. Improving a church’s ability to identify, recruit, train and deploy these men and women into their unique callings is what pastoral ministry is all about. Once these leaders are set in place, we then need to ask how we will increase their knowledge base and improve their skill-sets through monitoring and feeding these leaders so they can move into the last phase, reproducing themselves into the lives of other leaders.

**Fullness of the Holy Spirit**

Before we talk through vision-casting, followership, character, and competency, we need to explore the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the leader. When the apostles in Acts 6 were confronted with the problem of the Greek speaking Jewish widows being overlooked in the church’s food distribution, they told the members of the Greek-speaking Christian community to select men who were “full of the Holy Spirit.” This describes people that exhibit characteristics typical of those in whom the Spirit is active. Given the account we have in Acts 2 showing Peter connecting the outpouring of the Spirit as manifested in the gift of tongues with Joel’s “spirit of prophecy” (Turner 2000), this would mean that Spirit-filled leaders are those that regularly experience charismatic and prophetic activity as they operate under the direction of the Holy Spirit. On this foundation, God speaks and gives specific assignments to his leaders. In the case of Acts 6, we find that the apostles laid their hands on six men and commissioned them with a specific task.

Leadership recruitment would then mean that we identify those disciples that are full of the Holy Spirit, who cast vision, enlist followers, exhibit godly character and demonstrate competency in the task. In the area of competency this could be associated with gifts imparted through the laying on of hands at the inception of a ministry assignment.

**Leadership and Vision**

**Visioneering**

I first saw the term “visioneering,” the art of getting, sharing and disseminating vision to follow-
ers, from Andy Stanley’s book of the same name (1999). As the writer of Proverbs so aptly put it, “Without a vision the people perish” (Prov. 29:18). What is vision and how does a leader get one? To answer this, we need to start by identifying what a vision is not. A vision is not a dream. A dream precedes a vision and is much broader; it is the “soup” out of which a vision comes. In a very real sense, a vision is a dream taken to the next stage; it needs God’s specific prompting and application to become a vision. Furthermore, a vision is not an objective or goal. Objectives and goals are cold and concrete. A vision is warm and excites the heart. Just as a dream precedes a vision, so a vision precedes objectives and goals. Finally, a vision is not a purpose. Purpose statements answer the question, “Why?” Vision answers the question, “What?”

A vision is a clear mental picture of a preferable future given by God. The leader looks out at the world and begins to see things that are not right and begins to long for the upsetting of the status quo and the dawning of the revolutionary kingdom of God. In the process of wishing and praying that the kingdom would come to a specific person, situation, group, city, etc., it slowly or suddenly becomes clear to the leader what it will look like when God’s deliverance arrives. Vision, then, comes out of the transference of the pain and longings in Jesus’ heart to the heart of the leader. As a piece of grit becomes a pearl inside of the oyster, so the pain in Jesus’ heart becomes the vision in the mind of the leader.

Furthermore, a vision involves both personal and corporate elements and needs to be in alignment with the biblical narrative (cf. Jackson 2009) and orthodox theology. Regarding a church’s vision, it is assumed that local church leadership has worked through its vision, mission, values, etc. and it is written down so emerging leaders can read it. The pastor, with the help if his/her team, then casts that vision into the church. Those whom God is calling alongside the pastor are enabled by God to see the vision as a reality by faith, thus showing that they are onboard with what God is planning to do in and through them. The pastor needs to committed to the vision lest competing agendas the team off-track. As the pastor and leaders continually cast the vision, the church is given a window into what God wants to accomplish through them in the years to come. It is in this context that the visioneering process described above occurs. Those who are on the same page with the pastor will partner with the team to fulfill the vision under the ongoing direction of the Holy Spirit who distributes gifts and breaks up the overall vision into doable tasks for the ever-growing population of leaders.

**Birthing, Nurturing and Balancing**

Another aspect of visioneering is recognizing what the Holy Spirit is emphasizing in the life of the church at a specific time. John Wimber taught that when the Holy Spirit is trying to build a value into a local church, He does so in phases that the leader needs to understand so he/she can “bless what the Father is doing.” The first is *birthing*. Generally babies are birthed one at a time. In the same way, it is generally true that the Holy Spirit concentrates on one or two values at a time as He builds local churches. His goal is to bring to life a specific set of behaviors that by being emphasized continually for some period of time will morph into habitual corporate behaviors. When collective habits change, cultures change (Schein 2004).

Once a behavior has become habitual, it needs to be *nurtured*. Every once in a while the leader needs to visibly model and speak into that behavior so as to reaffirm its importance and to explain how it is helping the church’s objectives and goals to be fulfilled. This is best done by storytelling and the celebration of victories tied to that cultural value.

Once a behavior is birthed and habitual, being nurtured as needed, there is a third component that needs to be a part of the mix, what I call *balancing*. Balancing refers to values and behaviors that are not yet a part of the corporate culture but are a part of the “whole plan of God” (Acts 20.27). Thus, in exhortations about the future, balancing issues need to be spoken about so the leaders and workers in the organization are never allowed to
become complacent but challenged by the potential for an even greater future by adopting new values and behaviors.

**Generalists and Specialists**

All leaders need to have a vision to be generalists before they are specialists. They first need to be, as we have said, exhibit A of what we want disciples to look like. A “leader” that does not have a virile private life with the Lord and in personal disciplines, a leader has no business asking her/his people to adopt behaviors that the mentor lacks the faith to develop.

When we zoom out to encompass all the spiritual gifts, while we will certainly exemplify some of them in our gift mix (Clinton and Clinton 1993), we will not come even close to exhibiting them all. We, collectively, as Christ’s body, have all the gifts as he disperses them according to his will (Acts 2.33; 1 Cor. 12:11). Leaders then, like Max DePree’s analogy of leadership being like a jazz band where the conductor calls forth the giftedness in each member as they improvise their parts. This, of course, does not preclude the situational giving of gifts whereby each member of Christ’s body can operate in any of the gifts in any situation as Christ determines. It is only to say that when we’re talking about the subject of leadership, we are talking about constitutional gifts that that are a part of us and describe our unique function in the larger group.

Tri Robinson of the Boise Vineyard has developed a grid that shows how generalists, here meaning those who have gifts to care for and develop people, can benefit from specialists, here meaning those that specialize in some area of ministry via an exceptionally strong gift-mix in a certain area, such as evangelism or healing. Specialists, like lobbyists in Washington, keep the urgency of their calling and giftedness ever before the generalist groups, such as Bible studies, small groups, Sunday school classes, etc. So, an evangelism specialist can visit an adult Sunday school class and remind the people of the call to evangelize the lost and to impart skills and stir up gifts from the Holy Spirit to enable them to do so. Here is how Robinson’s matrix can look at every level, from a local church to a whole denomination (1996):

![Reproducible System of oversight](image)

**Meaning, Morale and Momentum**

My leadership experience has taught me that those who lead with vision must pay attention to a rhythm of three cycles in the groups they lead, meaning, morale and momentum. The dynamics of all three have to be understood in conjunction with the birthing, nurturing and balancing seasons in a church’s life in order for the leader to understand how organizations grow.

Sowing meaning into the life of a church is tied to getting a vision for how God wants to birth something new in the church. Nothing happens without the leader receiving and communicating vision from God. The imparting of God’s vision for a preferable future is what creates meaning for followers. It is vision that gives us a reason to get out of bed in the morning. The impartation of this vision, or meaning, is what Daniel Goleman says is the most important job of a leader. He calls this “resonance” (Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee 2004). What drives a great team, says Goleman, is
emotion. When the leader walks into a room, it is the emotional quality that he/she brings that sets the tone and calls the spirits of the workers and leaders to the fulfillment of the vision.

Resonance rises as meaning is sown consistently and with demonstrated successes for the group. When the team sees that the vision is actually bearing fruit, the morale begins to go up. There is a buzz in the air because expectations are high. In the church context we call this faith. The coming of the kingdom of God is always tied in the Gospels to faith, whether that faith was Jesus’ faith, the faith in the/a group or in a person being ministered to.

High morale creates momentum. Momentum doesn’t last forever, but when a group has it, having had a successful season of creating meaning and raising morale, it is the genius of leadership to harness that energy by releasing church members to play their unique parts in fulfilling the church’s God-given mission. This will often require a systems change as the organization has to expand to enhance the growth of the organism (see Organism vs. Organization, 9). A church grows as it hauls in the catch from each wave and trains the next generation of leaders so that when the next cycle of meaning, morale and momentum occurs, they will be ready to identify, recruit, train, deploy, monitor, feed and reproduce the worker and leader harvest.

**Leadership and Followership**

**Gaining a Following**

If the first thing that a leader needs is vision, the second is the ability to enlist a following to fulfill the vision. How will the leader garner a following? Once a leader has a vision, as was discussed earlier, it needs to be written down and the values, priorities, practices and philosophy thought through. Why? It is because by writing it the leader has language to impart to followers. The next step in leadership is communicating the vision as broadly as possible. Most people are waiting for someone to lead them to a preferable future.

When I was in seminary I knew that God wanted me to be a church planter. I thought through very carefully what kind of church I wanted to plant. I had some vague language for it but no group that I knew of was in alignment with my vision, values, etc. I assumed that I would need to go out and plant an independent church, but then I met John Wimber. When he shared his vision for the Vineyard, it immediately resonated in my heart that this was what I was looking for. He had thought it through in much greater detail than I, and that impressed me. I immediately asked where to sign up. I’ve been a Vineyard pastor ever since. I still follow what he stood for, even though he’s now with the Lord, because his values and behaviors were mine, or what I wanted to be mine if only I could be mentored. When I planted our first church, I followed John’s model. I wrote my vision, values, priorities, etc. down in a rough document that my church called “the Magna Charta.” What I found was that there were people just waiting for exactly the kind of church I wanted to plant. I had people cry when they read the Magna Charta. They had been praying for years for what I had given language to, and when they heard me share my heart there was an immediate “bearing witness” in their hearts. We began to have more and more followers.

All of the above presupposes an ability to read our audience and communicate in culturally relevant and practical ways the vision that God has given us. Potential followers need to receive the same message we are trying to give. This means that we must exegete our context well. If we don’t, true communication will not take place. True communicators talk in pictures and tell stories that embody the didactic material that we are trying to impart (for the basics of communication cf. Kraft 1999). Those that can’t communicate clearly and in an exciting and relevant manner will never gather followers.

Gaining a following requires not only being a good communicator but also being where people are and stepping out and taking risks to share Jesus and what he has called us to do. This is where Goleman’s thesis is helpful; leaders who want to
get people to help them fulfill their vision have to create resonance, an emotional connection. Followers have to feel our passion and see the fire in our eyes. This is not about extroversion, it’s about passion. Ardent fervor can be in anyone’s heart once God gives the vision. Leaders, however, have an intangible quality that makes people want to follow their vision and passion. This is where the anointing with the Spirit that comes with God’s calling comes in. Which is more appealing, a frozen steak or one that is sizzling on the grill? They are the same substance but only one is giving off the aroma of the kingdom of God that people are attracted to.

Once people are following, they must be put to work. Part of leadership means beginning the discipleship process outlined earlier in the paper at the outset of ministry. This is the first thing Jesus did, he gathered future leaders to watch what he was doing. As the leader steps out to further the mission, the Discipleship Loop begins. The more the leader puts his followers in disequilibrating situations for the sake of identifying teachable moments, the more kingdom impartation can occur. It is at this point that we begin to notice those who come early and stay late, those who are hungry for more and ask questions, those who are emotionally engaged and those who begin to emulate the mannerisms of the leader. When a leader sees this, it is the sign to begin the process of identifying, recruiting, training and deploying these people as workers and leaders. Hopefully, by this time, a manager is beginning to emerge that can help the visionary with organizing and maintaining the work.

It should be noted that John Wimber taught that we would see four basic types of followers joining us at four different stages (Wimber 1986):

- **Radicals**: radicals are those that are dissatisfied with the status quo and tend to jump on the bandwagon quickly. They seldom stay for the long haul. They are emotional responders and will be upset by something rather quickly.

- **Progressives**: progressives are sheepishly attracted to new visions but are more cautious. They are rational responders and comprise the group that builds the first foundation for the vision.

- **Conservatives**: conservatives are mildly resistant to new ideas and will not jump on board initially. They too are rational responders but once the leader and progressive followers have proven themselves with longevity and victory they can become valuable and stable members of the community.

- **Traditionalists**: traditionalists are those in the system that demand equilibrium and are resistant to change of any kind. Like the progressives they too are emotional responders and will not embrace change at any cost but will fight it.

Once we have followers, we will have to keep those followers in order to disciple them and fulfill the mission to raise up disciple-making leaders. We keep them by earning their respect and trust and by continually modeling what it means to be a growing disciple. As was said, we need to be Exhibit A of what we want to see reproduced. This cannot be emphasized enough. If we don't do it, they won’t. From the public failure of so many good leaders in the last quarter century in America we see that Zechariah’s parable is true: strike the shepherd and the sheep scatter (Zech. 13:7). Today, the thing that people are looking for more than anything else is someone they can trust, someone with good ol’ fashioned character. These are those committed to what Eugene Peterson calls “a long obedience in the same direction” (2000). As DePree says, “Integrity is job one” for the servant leader (1992: 7). We will deal with the character of a leader below. Suffice it to say for now that once a potential leader has demonstrated trustworthiness, potential followers will continue to follow his/her vision and call. The most important quality that a leader can have, then, is to continue to grow personally and corporately in Emotional Intelligence.

**Emotional Intelligence**

Daniel Goleman says that the psychological ability to resist impulse—emotional self control—is the most fundamental of all personal and rela-
tional skills. There is no more important asset that a leader can bring to the table in terms of followership. Emotional intelligence is the ability to be in touch with and label what one is feeling (e.g., I’m angry, sad, weary, etc.), to harness those emotions, to evaluate them and then to proactively redirect them in an empathetic and non-anxious response. Goleman says that emotional intelligence has five components:

- Emotional self-awareness
- Emotional harnessing
- Emotional redirection
- Emotional empathy
- Relational productivity

The result is a leader:

- who can take constructive criticism
- who is not codependent with others
- who can trace a perception before making a judgment
- who doesn’t take himself or herself too seriously
- who is not angry under the surface but is at peace on the inside
- who is not threatened by others who are better at some things or that have the best idea in the meeting

Only leaders that act like this can relate to his/her circle with a non-anxious, fully differentiated presence and pursue reality with a capital R. Since the system thrives on feedback, this kind of leadership enhances followership. Who wouldn’t want to follow this kind of leader, especially when they have vision, character, competency, and anointing along with emotional intelligence? The answer is that this kind of leader is going to have followers! Without emotional intelligence leadership can become toxic, and despite the consistent sowing of clear and powerful meaning, it does not result in the raising of morale or in the surging of momentum. Ergo, the organization stagnates and will falter and die if not properly diagnosed and steps taken to revive it.

As was mentioned above, Goleman thinks that the primary job of a leader is to create resonance (good feelings) in those he/she leads. Job one of leadership as it hits the ground, then, is emotional. Emotions are contagious and set the tone for the group by showing how worthy its vision, mission, values, objectives and goals are.

The key to the fulfillment of the mission is creating more emotionally intelligent leaders that have personal and relational competency and develop social awareness and relational management of the mission. Relational management hinges on the ability to develop active listening skills.

**Active Listening**

In the book *Living for Heaven’s Sake*, Gary Sweeten shows how to develop the two skill-sets mentioned above, social awareness and the relational management of the mission (Sweeten, Clippard, and Ping 1993). Developing these skill-sets involves the art of active listening. Active listening means genuinely engaging another with probing questions that build the three most important qualities necessary for building trust in relationships, **empathy**, warmth and respect. On the foundation of empathy, warmth and respect a culture of trust is built where both parties feel safe. It is only when the parties in a relationship feel safe that they will trace perceptions of reality in a forthright and concrete manner and set goals to help the relationship mature. Otherwise the law of entropy will set in because one or both parties are pretending things are different than they are. If the latter is the case, flight or flight will occur. Only with active listening will an emotionally intelligent relationship emerge, upon which a culture of trust can be built.

**Mentoring**

Emotionally Intelligent leaders proactively choose their leadership style according to which would serve the group better. Goleman sees these styles as:

- Visionary: the leader knows when the time is right to sow vision for the future
Coaching: the leader knows when the apprentice needs to be taught one-on-one principles of discipleship.

Affiliative: the leader knows when the apprentice’s competency level has grown to the point where she/he needs to be treated more as a colleague.

Democratic: the leader knows when the apprentice, who is now a leadership peer, needs to be a part of the decision-making process.

Pacesetting: the leader knows when an apprentice needs to be exhorted to stay in the game and give his/her best.

Commanding: the leader knows, whether it be in the face of trying circumstances or potential insubordination, when it is time to be directive.

Having chosen the proper leadership style for the situation, how do we identify potential and future leaders that we can raise up in an emotionally intelligent culture? We look for:

- Who is coming early and staying late?
- Who is being joked about, imitated, having the parties, etc.
- Who has vision?
- Who is being followed?
- What is their track record working under authority? Can they take correction?
- What is their track record of getting vision and enlisting a following? Our past is the best predictor of our future.

Title and Turf

Now that we have identified potential leaders, there are some things to be aware of. One of those is that we have to watch out for in identifying leaders has to do with those who think that they should have title and turf. Leadership is not a lifetime calling but is contingent on what one does at a particular time and in a particular context. Organic leadership, then, is functional. One may have a title or turf but true leadership belongs to the one who is leading at any given time. Just because someone has a title does not mean that they are the leader. That person might have leadership potential based on skills, gifts or experience, but the one who leads is the one who has vision and followership.

People who have had title and turf in their past often expect to rest on their laurels and feel they are entitled to leadership in the new context. Because leadership is functional, however, and given by those that follow, it is not something we can claim if true leadership is organic and not titular. True leadership, then, is always on the line and is tested over and over, both in our present context and wherever we might find ourselves in the future. The heart posture of a leader is the willingness to get at the end of the line as a servant again and again, having confidence that our gifts will make a way for us in time. They walk with a limp like Jacob did after he had been humbled by God. If we really are leaders called by God and given new vision, the people of God in the new context will bear witness to the heart, behaviors and fruit of the new leader. This is how yesterday’s leaders retain their leadership for today.

Leadership and Character

Besides title and turf, the biggest issue on the table with developing leaders is character. Character is the ability to image God by faith over the long haul, Peterson's long obedience in the same direction. All leaders, therefore, must have a virile private life so they can know God and live the life of a disciple. As Howard Hendricks always used to say, “Show me a man that is good in public and I’ll show you a man that is good in private” (audio course on Leadership). This, of course, means a life lived in the spiritual disciplines outlined in such books as Richard Foster’s Celebration of Discipline (1978). It also means someone who is growing in the obedience that comes from faith (Rom. 1:5; cf. Piper 1986); a leader trusts God and follows His ways because he trusts that by embracing the cross, God will vindicate his name by bringing the leader
through suffering into an experience of resurrection from the dead. For the joy set before him Jesus endured the cross (Heb. 12:2). A leader’s followers are encouraged as they watch their mentors enduring all kinds of trials, always being honest about their pain and struggles but, in the end, landing on their feet and praising God by faith. True leaders who praise God by faith during dark nights of the soul so they can continue that praise when eating the table set before them in the presence of their enemies. They come out the other side of trials wholehearted, single-minded and resolute to fulfill the mission God has given them. God’s leaders are fighters and not afraid to stand in faith against the enemies’ most horrific shots. This kind of person has a vulnerable heart that is open and submitted to God for his instruction and wisdom. Proverbs 4:13 says, “Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life.” Such a heart posture will lead to a life of emotional intelligence.

If a virile private life is a foundational characteristic of a leader, so is a healthy home life, be it as a single person or with a family. Paul outlines the need for elders to have their home lives under control and for their private lives to match up with their public lives (Damazio 1988: 120ff). God’s chosen leaders develop over time into the kind of people who are the same on Tuesday as on Sunday. They are not afraid of “pop quizzes” because they have nothing to hide.

The life of a leader will also be characterized by a series of fairly predictable developmental phases that have been outlined by Bobby Clinton (1998). In each phase God will test the leader through tests that the leader must pass, what Clinton calls “process items.” If the leader successfully negotiates these process items then she/he can move on into the next stage of development. The first phase, for instance, is a series of “checks,” the Word check to see if the leader’s heart is being formed by and breathed into by the Word of God, the Obedience check to see if the apprentice will submit themselves to God’s authority in the Word and through his voice, and the Integrity check so see if the leader can pass these checks consistently over time. Another big test that must be passed is the Authority check. Only as a leader has demonstrated submission to authority can he/she demonstrate the ability to have authority. The leader’s life, then, will be characterized by faring well under authority, even if “chomping at the bit”, because they understand what the Centurion knew who saw that Jesus lived his life under authority also (Mt 8:9).

A leader with a virile private life committed to prayer, the Word of God and obedience will approach his/her work as worship. Because God is excellent, they will want to honor God by doing excellent work. In finding God’s guidance they will hold in tension the need to wait on God for his initiative and the need to take initiative to plan on the data they have, all the while submitting their plans to God (Prov. 16:3, 9).

They will also lead like a servant. Since a leader’s needs are met by the Good Shepherd, these live as those that have no needs (“wants”) and can lie down in green pasture; there is no need to push to get our legitimate needs met in illegitimate ways (Ps. 23:1 -2). Good leaders have peace within and have grown to love themselves as “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Ps. 139:14) and understand that they have been “crowned with glory and honor” (Ps. 8:5). While their self image as God’s beloved gives them a regal bearing, they also know that they are sinners (Rom. 3.11-18) and never take themselves too seriously. They know how to laugh, often at themselves, so their sorrow and intensity is lightened by joy.

Their style will be naturally supernatural with no hype or manipulation. They will talk in their natural voice, not one learned from their denomination or stream of ministry. They will be full of the Holy Spirit, exhibiting both a constitutional gift mix and the ability to move situationally in any of the gifts as God determines and the need demands. A good leader will then call forth the same from his/her students.

Emotionally intelligent leaders are highly relational and characterized by the heart of a servant
in everything they do. Because they are relational, servant leaders will be recognized by being excellent communicators that step into conflict quickly to resolve it. Neither are they afraid to speak in love into the lives of their followers so they can grow through the gift of exhortation. Their commitment to active listening, to review what was said earlier, means that they exude empathy, warmth and respect so as to create emotional safety. This will enable forthright and concrete communication to take place. Their communication ability will be based in their ability to hear and read their audience and choose speech patterns that are sensitive to non-verbal messages so the hearer can receive the same message that the leader is trying to give. Their communication will be full of Goleman’s resonance because they are full of vision and passion. They are contagious people that attract followers like bees on honey.

Because God’s leaders seek to raise up disciples, they will also be characterized as trainers and mentors. This means that they will be teaching formally and informally by speaking the words and doing the works of Jesus under the power of the Holy Spirit. These kinds of mentors will be constantly taking risks and disequilibrating their apprentices by delegating responsibility to them that is out of their comfort zone. Disciples will either sink or swim. If they swim, it is time to help them see their progress. If they sink, a teachable moment has been created that can be used to train them in kingdom principles and practices. The leaders are free to choose the style of leadership best suited to meet the student’s needs in the moment (Clinton and Stanley 1992), what Blanchard calls “situational leadership” (Blanchard, Zigarmi, and Zigarmi 1985). In these debriefing exchanges they are always trying to help their students connect the dots of their experience with the narrative of Scripture and their own local narratives. In this way they are not only imparting vision but giving apprentices meaning and a reason to get up in the morning. Morale and momentum will rise accordingly.

As Clinton has noted, leaders will pass through numerous tests and seasons in their lives as leaders, all with the goal of hearing Christ say at the end, “Well done my good and faithful servant” (Lk. 19:7). Clinton’s research has shown that many fail to finish well by reaching the phases he calls Convergence (when all of life’s lessons come together for the sake of others) and Afterglow (where a leader can enjoy the fruits of their labor) stages (1988: 46).

Leadership and Competency

Kouzes & Posner say that their research has uncovered that leaders worldwide have five general practices, each with a corresponding set of skills:

1. Ability to model what it is that you want others to be
   a. Skill of finding our own, distinct voice
   b. Skill of setting the example
2. Ability to inspire a shared vision
   a. Skill of being able to get a clear vision for a preferable future
   b. Skill set of being able to get others to follow by showing them eternal and personal value
3. Ability to challenge the status quo
   a. Skill set of always searching for new ways to do something better
   b. Skill set of continually experimenting and taking risks
4. Ability to empower others to help fulfill the vision
   a. Skill set of foster collaboration
   b. Skill set of strengthening others by showing trust in them to let them go for it
5. Ability to encourage the heart
   a. Skill set of watching your team to catch them doing it right to affirm them

These basic competencies are critical because if followers are not confident that their leaders know what they’re talking about, their authority will be undermined for lack of credibility. Leaders not only have to have vision, followers and
character, they have to have competence to lead effectively. The most common way of acquiring the necessary skill-sets is OJT, on the job training. The best way to staff a church is from within. Competency can also be learned on the job in other settings. Bill Hybels, pastor of Willow Creek church in Barrington Hills, IL is noted as saying that their highest recruiting pond at Willow Creek is among those that excel in business. Skills can also be obtained through a long track record in other ministries and their in-house training methods. Traditional seminary education is great at training people to be theologians but offers little in the art of self awareness or in working effectively with people; I was not prepared for ministry by going to seminary. It would have saved me a lot of personal pain if I’d had some OJT on a church staff somewhere. Unfortunately, we went out to plant our first church theologically sound but with very little emotional intelligence.

Robert Logan lists a number of core competencies necessary for pastoral ministry (1989). The first we have already dealt with, developing a vision, determining objectives and setting measurable goals. Once that has been done, leaders have to be able to achieve ownership of the above. We have covered this subject under Followership. There must be relational competency as described above under Emotional Intelligence and skills such as active listening and quick conflict resolution. With these in place, the people must be equipped for their work. This we covered in the, identify, recruit, train, deploy, monitor, feed and reproduce cycle. Next is the ability to identify people’s spiritual gifts so they are deployed in the right ministries. Visionaries must make sure that the administrative slots are covered and that the communication systems are built and working. Systems demand constant feedback, so communication is critical in a competent organization. The leader must also be constantly assessing whether the organizational system is adequate for the organism. Infrastructure, infrastructure, and infrastructure: the leader must build a team where everybody gets to play and the necessary people are in the loop. Does it fit? Does it work? Does it communicate? Are the feedback synapses firing? If not, the organization will soon have a gap and begin to work with a false perception of reality. People will go underground in their pain and the system will begin to become toxic. Organizational competency is a must after interpersonal competency.

The use of time is also a critical competency quality. The leader must be efficient at time management and teach the team how to manage time in fulfillment of the mission. He/she must also have healthy personal and organizational boundaries. Along with the laughter that comes from a good team enjoying their work comes the team value of “sticking to the knitting,” to use Tom Peter’s term (Peters and Jr. 1982). We must stay with the business of the church—making leaders that make disciples—and not chase the wonderful rabbits that fly by.

Finally, referring back to what Kouzes and Posner call “challenging the process,” in order for a church or company to continue to grow and be an exciting place to work, the team must see the leader pressing in to challenge the status quo and set BHAGs (big, hairy, audacious goals) that take faith. If the leader can break the BHAG up into doable chunks and the team can hit enough singles, they will eventually win the game. If vision, followership, and character are in alignment, and the leader demonstrates competence, you will have a leader that operates not by position but by the power of moral authority commensurate with a servant leader.

Bibliography


