

Build Your Personal **POWER BASE**

**30 Tips to Becoming
More Influential in your World**



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Introduction

I just did a search on Amazon for “leadership book.” You know how many results their web site coughed up? 184,211. That’s a lot of books on leadership. One hundred eighty four thousand, two hundred and eleven. By the time you read this, it’s probably even bigger.

The sheer magnitude of that number is enough to tell you something: there is no one good answer, no perfect system that will tell you all you need to know about leadership. No one has cracked the code on what it is or how to do it.

And I haven’t, cracked the code either. Most of those writers are probably smarter than I am, or have spent more time studying the theory or advising and consulting with businesses about it. But here’s what I think I can offer that a lot of the others don’t. I can keep it simple, and I can give you practical ways to get better at being the best leader you can be. And you can start doing them right now.

Here’s the first simple step in the process. Realize this:

TIP: Learn to lead yourself before you try to lead others.
(more here)

So we’ll start this book out by taking a look at what kind of a person you need to be in order to become a good leader. I think you will find that as you start to put some of these things

in place, you will start to become an informal leader without even really trying to.

Have you seen this compilation of quotes?

To do is to be. --Socrates

To be is to do. --Sartre

Do-be-do-be-do. --Sinatra

I think all three of them have it right.

TIP: Do the things that good leaders do, and you will start to be a good leader.

The mind will follow what the body starts. Doing is becoming. And as a leader, you naturally find yourself doing what needs to be done. And the great philosopher Frank Sinatra put it all together in song so that we can all remember. It's a cycle that supports it self.

A couple cautions for you.

1. This is not a quick fix, success-in-one-week process. This stuff takes time. Leadership starts with you, but ends in the hearts and minds of the people around you, and it takes time for opinions and perceptions to change. Think marathon, not sprint.
2. It is not easy. If it were, everyone would be a great leader and there wouldn't be all those books for sale on Amazon. It

takes intention, effort, focus, and discipline to be a good leader. Be ready to do a little work, a lot of it behind the scenes. Good things happen to those who are prepared and put in the work.

3. It is totally worth it. Once in a while, you will get that knowing look, or a quiet comment off to the side, or a simple thank you from someone that lets you know that you have had a real, positive, lasting impact on their lives. That's huge. In the end, that's what we are here for. And you are setting out on a path to get there.

I congratulate you on getting to this point and wish you the best as you undertake this journey.

If you do the things in this little eBook regularly, you will start to see a change. People will start to look at you differently, perceive you in a new light. Even before you are officially put in some sort of leadership position, you will become a leader, often without even realizing it.

Are you ready? Let's get to it!

Part I: Leading Yourself

Most powerful is he who has himself in his own power.
- Lucius Annaeus Seneca

People buy into the leader before they buy into the vision.

- John C. Maxwell

Are Leaders Born?

“He’s a natural leader.” Ever heard that? Some people seem to think that great leaders have to be born with the right genes. But I don’t think that’s the case.

Here’s a metaphor that you might find useful: compare leadership to athletics, like running. Some people are great runners – Olympic quality, world class. Can everybody reach that level? No, obviously not.

A while ago, someone asked a champion athlete what the most important thing to do to become great. His response? “Choose your parents wisely.”

To an extent, I think that may also be true of leadership. The greatest leaders seem to have a certain gift to lead, to read people and situations, to inspire with vision, to engage on a personal level and win wholehearted commitment. They are people that others seem to just naturally want to follow. They are world class.

But that doesn’t mean other people can’t lead. There isn’t only one great runner out there; there are many.

And whether you are concerned about running or leading, genetics is something you can’t change anyway, so there is no use in worrying about it. We all have the abilities and talents

we are born with. What we can change is what we do with the gifts we have. That's the thing to focus on.

TIP: Focus on what you can change, not on what you can't change.

You can choose to watch TV or play video games all day, and that might be fine for you if you are happy where you are. But if you are looking for change, for improvement, to have an impact on your world, it's going to take a little effort. And I think you are probably capable of it.

It doesn't happen overnight, either. Most worthwhile things take effort; you have to work at it. But if you consistently apply yourself over time, you will amaze yourself at the results. The thing is to set a goal, then take a reasonable, achievable step towards that goal every day. Over time, you will be amazed at what you can accomplish.

Here's a personal example. I'm not a great athlete, but I like to get in my exercise – it's good for getting outside in the fresh air, helps my self-confidence, maintains my health, and keeps me balanced in life.

Over the last several years I had worked up to doing some long distance triathlons. I loved training and racing and was happy with the results, but in the process of training and racing, I had strained my Achilles tendon on my right leg – that long tough membrane that attaches the calf muscle to the heel – it's pretty

important for running, as you might imagine. I had to stop running for a while.

Nearly a year went by. In September of 2013 I was itching to race again and believed that I was mostly healed. So I started running again. One mile a day. Six days a week. At pretty much a shuffle pace. It seemed almost ridiculous – too easy, too short. Only six miles a week.

But I knew I had to ease into it, to grow gradually, to steadily increase.

After a few weeks at one mile a day, I bumped it up to 1.5, then later 2. Winter came, the snow fell, but still I ran. Not always enthusiastically, but I made sure to get out the door every day. By spring I was up to four miles a day, 24 miles a week.

I started making every other day a longer run, building gradually to eight miles and doing a longer run on Saturdays up to 16, 18, 20 by the end of spring. I topped out at 42 miles a week (that's on top of a bunch of swimming and cycling).

I completed Ironman Texas in May with my second fastest marathon run time ever (the fastest didn't involve a swim and bike warmup!). It felt great! It took eight months to go from zero miles to 26.2, but the payoff was wonderful.

On the long drive back to Pennsylvania, a thought popped into my head. I had a birthday coming up in November. Wouldn't it

be kind of cool if I could run 50 miles in one day the month I turned 50 years old?

The more I thought about the idea, the more I liked it. I love a good challenge, but I had never run farther; a marathon was tough enough. This was daunting. There were a few more races through the summer and fall, and I kept slowly adding distance and miles. Steadily, consistently, always putting in my time.

On a cold November morning in 2014, I lined up with over 800 other crazies, the gun went off, and we went for it. It was 16 miles of hilly, rocky trail running, 26 miles of flat, winding canal pathway, and a final eight miles of rolling country roads. It took a while, a long while, and it wasn't easy, especially the last eight miles. Every section had its challenges. But I finished before the sun set, and dropped exhausted but happy onto the grass.

I had gone from zero miles to running 50 in one day in just a little over a year.

This isn't to try to impress you with an achievement of mine. It's about trying to describe how incredible the human animal is, how adaptable, how resilient. We all have these qualities. I saw people out on that running trail that I would never have suspected to be long distance runners. I wouldn't have thought they could finish 10 miles, let alone 50. If we had met on the street, there would be no way to tell. All sizes, shapes, and looks.

I don't mind telling you that some of those people who didn't look like great runners were passing me on those last eight miles of rolling countryside. Respect to them!

So you never know until you try. And the real winners were everyone of those people who woke up on that frosty morning last November, laced up their running shoes, and took a shot at it. They got out there, committed themselves to doing something, put in the time and the effort every day for weeks and months so that they would be ready when the test came.

Most of them finished, but whether they were first last, somewhere in the middle, or "only" made it to the 42 mile point, they were all winners for making the attempt.

TIP: Don't sell yourself short; you never know what you can do until you try; you can do more than you think you can.

I think the same goes for leadership. You don't really know until you give it a shot. But you also don't run 50 miles on day one. You pick one thing, one small step that will get you closer to your goal and you do that. Run one mile. Do it today. Lace up your shoes and do it now. Tomorrow, run another one. The day after that – do it again. Soon you will find that you can do a little bit more. Be consistent, show up every day ready to put in the effort. You will be amazed at what you can do.

TIP: To improve at something, focus on making one small step forward every day.

What's the takeaway here? You don't know until you try. As with running, you can always get better at leadership. Pick one thing to learn about and work on, then lace up your shoes and give it a try. Tomorrow, do it again. Day after that, add another little something.

TIP: Don't try to be the best in the world, just work on being a little better every day; you will be amazed at how far that approach will get you.

Will you be the next great leader? No, odds are that you probably won't. Can you become a good, solid leader who is respected by his peers and able to get the job done through people? Absolutely. But it's going to take some work. We have to put in the miles every day. Are you ready to get started?

Set the Foundation

The quality of a leader is reflected in the standards they set for themselves.

- Ray Kroc

OK, so everyone has the potential to become a good leader. Great. Where do you start?

Well, everyone wants to know what it takes to be a leader. Maybe you have asked that question yourself. But it turns out you already know the answer. You already know because you can answer this question: What are the characteristics of someone you would be willing to follow?

Go ahead, take a minute, and write down the top five characteristics that to you would make someone worth following. Actually take the time and do this. If it helps, imagine you are an employee in a business, and you were just put on a team with several others to work on a project, like designing a new product. You are getting ready to go to the first meeting, where you will meet the person you will have to work directly for the next several months. What do you hope they will be like?

Write down your top five things:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

[next page]

OK, trick question. There is no right answer for everyone. Turns out there are lots of right answers. I hit a couple web sites and quickly came up with this “short” list of the “must-have” leadership qualities that experts say you should have.

Honest	Confident
Trustworthy	Self-Disciplined
Integrity	Servant
Character	Teachable
Knowledge	Visionary
Competence	Consistent
Open-minded	Humility
Charisma	Decisive
Commitment	Focused
Communicator	Inspiring
Competent	Passionate
Courage	Transparent
Discernment	Accountable
Focus	Innovative
Generosity	Likeable
Initiative	Dedicated
Listening	Supportive
Passionate	Consistent
Positive Attitude	Optimistic
Problem-Solving	Accountable
Relatable	Example Setter
Responsible	

If you are like many, honesty or trustworthiness was probably up near the top of your list. So let's talk about that for a second.

In 2014, the Pew Research Center conducted a survey of 1,835 people [<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/01/14/chapter-2-what-makes-a-good-leader-and-does-gender-matter/>]. Not surprisingly, it found that fully 84% of the respondents believed that honesty was the most essential quality of a leader.

TIP: The number one thing to begin with is to become trustworthy.

A synonym for honesty is trustworthy – the first of the twelve Boy Scout Laws. I don't think that was a coincidence.

A Scout tells the truth. He is honest, and he keeps his promises. People can depend on him.]

- excerpt from the BSA Handbook

People notice when you are honest with yourself and with others. It makes a big difference in how they see you, both as a person and as a potential leader.

TIP: Start With the Truth and Go From There

C.S. Lewis defined integrity as doing the right thing, even when no one is watching. That really gets to the core of it for me.

1. Not too long ago award-winning journalist Brian Williams was suspended from his job as an anchorman at NBC Nightly News. At the time, he was reportedly making over \$10 million a year. [Stephen Battaglio from Los Angeles Times (December 15, 2014). ["NBC's Brian Williams stays true to news, with a new contract expected"](#). Retrieved March 2, 2015.]

It had become clear that he had embellished the truth in a number of stories. In particular, he claimed in 2015 that while riding in an Army Chinook helicopter in the 2003 Gulf War, he had been shot down. In truth, he had been in another helicopter at least 30 minutes behind. He was nowhere near being shot down himself.

A subsequent investigation revealed a number of similar embellishments to a variety of stories. With the public aware that he had been less than honest, his integrity in question, Williams had to step aside. He had lost the public confidence.

With everything else going for him, he had compromised the one thing that was most important: his integrity.

In the same way, without the faith and confidence of his team, a leader cannot be effective.

*It is true that integrity alone won't make you a leader,
but without integrity you will never be one.*

- Zig Ziglar

Moral authority comes from following universal and timeless principles like honesty, integrity, treating people with respect.

- Stephen Covey

The Rest of the List

After that, what you chose to list as your other four qualities is probably pretty wide open.

If you don't like the person who is supposed to be your leader right now, it's likely you listed some things that are the opposite of what they represent.

Maybe you want someone who is open and receptive to your ideas and respects your knowledge and opinion. Maybe you want someone who is humble, not full of himself. Or empathetic, understanding. How about someone with vision – able to see the big picture and guide the team to getting there. Decisive? Sure; no need to wallow around indecisively when there is work to be done.

Depending on who you ask, there are anywhere from five to fifty or more “must-have” qualities to be a good leader. You saw the list. That's a lot.

The fact that there are so many qualities on so many lists just tells you nobody really knows for sure; it's not an exact science. Really, only you can tell what will make you want to follow

someone else. And you might not even know until you see or experience it.

I'm not sure a laundry list is what you need anyway. It's not as if all you need is the "golden checklist," a clip board and a pen and you just start checking off each one as you achieve it. How would you know when you have achieved Integrity? Or Good communication skills? Or Decisiveness?

Besides that, we are talking about qualities, things you have more or less of. And how much you have can change over time and vary with the situation.

OK, so then what was the point of listing your top five? I got you to think, and that will be important to you as you work to improve your leadership skills. You will be working on things that are important to you. Chances are that what you think is important in a leader is important to those around you as well.

So these are the five things to aim for.

A good technique to improving yourself is to keep whatever goal you have foremost in your mind every day. People trying to lose weight might post a picture of someone with rock-hard abs on the refrigerator door; people saving money for a car might put a photo of what they are saving towards.

In the same way, if you want to develop some of those traits, put them where you will see them every day. I'd humbly

suggest you be sure to list Integrity at the top if you didn't already.

Write out your list. Don't type and print. Take an actual pen and an actual 3x5 card and write it down. Then look up and write down the definition. **Studies show that the act** of writing it down significantly increases your personal commitment.

TIP: Writing something down makes it more real and creates a more lasting "contract" with yourself.

Now put the card where you will see it every day. Refrigerator door, bathroom mirror, car visor, laptop screen. Remember and memorize these traits. You should be able to repeat them by heart. Say them to yourself every morning out loud. Strange as it may seem, the acts of writing them down and saying them out loud will reinforce their importance to you and strengthen your conscious and subconscious commitment to acting on them.

TIP: To reach a goal, keep it foremost in your mind; write it down and put it where you can see it every day.

Then what? Next time you have to make a decision, before you make your choice, stop. Take out the card, or repeat the list to yourself, and ask, "what would a person with these traits do in this situation?" Let that be your guide.

TIP: Next time you have to decide something, check your list and make sure your choices reflect the qualities you seek.

Or if you have already made a decision and things aren't looking real great as a result, pull that card out again, and ask yourself the same question, "what would a person with these traits do in this situation?"

Maybe you had a sure-fire plan but it didn't work out after all, and you can't deliver something you promised; what would a person of integrity do? Let it slide and hope nobody notices? Or call the person you promised and tell them what is going on and what you are doing about it?

Example/story here?

Let your little list guide your actions every day and you can't help but get better as a person and as a potential leader. Because you are getting better at leading yourself, at developing that all-important character and integrity and lots of those other things on the list.

A person always doing his or her best becomes a natural leader, just by example.

- Joe DiMaggio

Part II: Develop Your Personal Power Base

The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any.

- Alice Walker

Sources of Power

“Do it because I’m the boss and I told you to.” Ever heard that one? That’s not leadership. That’s a lack of leadership. That’s someone in a position of leadership who has run out of other ways, better ways, to get people to do things. But he’s not leading. He’s fallen back on his last resort: the system that put him in that position, and now, since he’s run out of other ways to influence, he’s trying to use the system itself to get something done.

A lot of managers do this. And people will generally do what they are told to do. Because of the system. But that doesn’t mean they want to do it, or like to do it, or least of all are interested in doing a good job. More likely the opposite.

What this manager is missing is a basic understanding of where his power and influence comes from.

TIP: To be influential, get your power from multiple sources.

Effective leaders are influential because they draw from several bases of power. Researchers **Smith and Raven** identified six **bases of power** that are key for people in leadership positions.

The Six Bases of Power

- Positional Powers. The first three are traditionally related to occupying a position of power

- **Legitimate Power** – occupying a recognized position of authority such as “Manager” or “Supervisor” or “President”
 - “Do it because I said so”
- **Reward Power** – able to compensate someone for complying
 - “Do it and I’ll give you something”
- **Coercive Power** – able to threaten or force someone to comply
 - “Do it or I’ll punish you”
- **Personal Powers.** The last three are more related to the attributes an individual may have.
 - **Information Power** – Has access to information sources that others may not have
 - “Do it because I know what’s going on”
 - **Expertise Power** – has superior knowledge, experience and skill that others recognize
 - “Do it because I know what I’m talking about”
 - **Referent Power** – has personal charm and appeal that makes other want to please them
 - “Do it because you like me”

As you prepare to become a leader, it can be very useful to understand what they are and how you can build up your resources in many of these areas.

Most writers start with the formal position of leadership and look at the powers it brings. But we are going to take the

opposite approach and look at what you can do right now to develop your base of power and influence regardless of your current position or situation. And if you work at these things every day, you will find yourself becoming more and more influential.

Get in the Know

Some call this Information power. Ask yourself, who are you going to follow, the person who knows what is going on or the one who doesn't? Easy answer. So how to you make yourself one of the people who knows? There are several ways.

To be a leader, you have to make people want to follow you, and nobody want to follow someone who doesn't know where he is going.

- Joe Namath

TIP: Get connected to the information source; If your group relies on information that comes from somewhere else, figure out how you can get connected to it, and plug in.

If there are key planning meetings where decisions are made, see if you can attend. If your group depends on other information sources that you can tap into, do that. Use the internet and other news venues to study up on current trends or happenings,

Personal Story. During my Army training days long ago, we moved in small groups through the woods. The groups communicated among themselves and with the Headquarters via a bulky radio. The leader needed someone to carry this radio and stay close by to ensure communication. Because it was heavy, this was not a popular job. But I found that when I

carried it, I could learn what was going on both within our little group and with the other groups around us. I knew almost as much as the leader did, and sometimes more. And having that information helped me make good decisions and influence the group to be successful. How can you become the Radioman for your team?

TIP: Get to know the people in your group; understand their skills, abilities, wants and needs.

Engage with the people in your group and learn about them. What are they good at? What do they like to do? What are they worried about? As you get into touch with what is going on at a personal level on the team, you will begin to understand more about what your group can do, what its capabilities are, and the potential it has.

And as you do this, people will start to see you have a genuine interest in them. People love to talk about themselves, everyone wants to be liked. The simple act of asking sincere questions about how someone is doing and what their interests are will draw you closer to them.

TIP: People like people who like them; express your like for your teammates every day by asking them about themselves.

Later, when topics come up, you can have useful input....

TIP: Get to know people outside your group who are doing similar things.

Engage with people outside your group. Everyone is always curious what the other groups are doing, so see if you can find out. Make friends with people in other groups in your organization or that your organization deals with and find out what they are doing and how they are doing it. Maybe you can bring back some thoughts to share.

Get to know the customers, clients, or other people your group works with or for and find out what is on their minds and what their needs are. The more you know about the other people and groups in your environment, the more you will be able to contribute that information to helping your team grow, improve, and make good decisions.

Build Expertise

People also want to follow someone who knows what he is doing – Expert Power. And you don't always have to be an out-and-out expert. You are the most expert if you know more about something than everyone else in the group. Here are a few ways you can do that.

Knowledge is Power

- Francis Bacon

1. Get experienced. People will naturally turn to those with experience when taking on a new task.

TIP: Do everything you can to gather relevant experiences that others don't have.

So do everything you can to gather as much experience as possible. Go on the outings, attend lots of events, sit in the meetings (even ones you don't have to be at) to learn what goes on, how the organization operates, and to have experiences that the other members of your group don't have. You will become more expert on the functions and activities of the group as you participate. So volunteer, attend, do.

A while ago I was stationed in Panama with a parachute unit. All of us had been to parachute school and knew the basics of the business. It's a complex and risky process to safely throw

hundreds of people and equipment out of an airplane at night 1,000 feet above the jungle, but we were pretty good at it.

One day a new Lieutenant joined the unit. He was younger and less experienced than most of us, but he had a craving to learn and get better at the craft. So he threw himself into every aspect of parachuting that he could. He did everything his own unit did, and then he took some of his spare time and volunteered to help out other units. Sometimes it was the grunt work of helping make things go smoothly at the hanger. Sometimes he was helping the team on the Drop Zone guide in the air craft. Sometimes he was in the plane working with the air crew. More than once, as many of us had finished our day and were headed home, we would see him heading down to the airfield to help out on another mission.

Soon, he had as much experience as we did, and not long after that, he had more. Though he was relatively junior in rank, more senior people began to ask him to help out and then to advise them. His expertise and experience was recognized; he was very good at it, and he soon had become very influential in what and how we did parachute operations, despite his lower rank.

2. Study up. If your group focuses on a certain area, then take yourself to school and make yourself smart.

TIP: Make yourself an expert by focused learning about your subject.

Next to actually getting out there and doing something, the next best way to gain expertise is to study up. There is so much available on the internet it's ridiculous. How-to videos, eBooks, blog sites, Wikipedia. It's not hard to get smart on just about any topic. And you would be surprised at how quickly you can get ahead. If you stick with it, your level of expertise will continue to grow and your ability to influence the group will grow with it.

Try this: Sit down and write out a list of things that are important to the group you are in. Ask yourself what is it that the group could stand to have people who are more knowledgeable about.

Then pick one and decide to make yourself an expert. Not by just watching one video or reading one book. Use a variety of sources, gather several viewpoints. Understand the different schools of thought, the various methods, the pros and cons of different techniques.

Treat it like you are getting ready for an essay exam and you won't be able to look at your notes. Get the information in your head. Because when it is time to share, you want to be able to talk immediately and with confident authority.

Stick with this one subject for a while – become significantly more knowledgeable; become the authority. Then start sharing what you have learned as opportunities arise.

If you have been thorough and careful, and share your knowledge in a way that is focused on helping the group (as opposed to making you look like an expert), you will find your influence rapidly expanding in that area, your opinion will carry more weight, and you will earn the respect of your peers.

Give Rewards

Many commentators mention the idea of giving rewards in the context of already being in a formal managerial position. In a “legitimate” position of authority you have access to many tools that can be used as rewards. You can give time off, pay bonuses, control the work schedule, award plaques, give away certain privileges.

The reality is that you don’t have to wait until you are the manager before you can reward someone. You have the power to do so right now.

People like it when good things happen to them, so here are a couple ideas you can use right now.

TIP: Say “Thank you” often; do it while making eye contact and smiling.

People like to be appreciated, to feel that their efforts are noticed and valuable. Make it a habit every day to try and find something someone did that you thought was good, and find a way to make them feel good about it. Sometimes a sincere, “nice job on that, thanks” is all it takes

In his book *The One Minute Manager*, Ken Blanchard talks about the “One Minute Praise” – it goes something like this:

1. Tell them specifically what you thought they did well.

2. Tell them how it made you feel and how it helps the team.
3. Pause a moment to let it sink in; make eye contact.
4. Tell them that you hope they will be able to do more of the same.
5. Shake hands or touch them in some appropriate way; this is a way of adding emphasis to your words and can become an unspoken agreement that they will continue to perform in the same way.

TIP: Express your appreciation publicly.

This is a kind of social reward. If someone did something that impressed you or helped the group, tell them thanks, and do it publically.

You don't need a loudspeaker or large public forum. But in a small group setting, you can just casually mention that you thought someone did a good job at something. Be specific about what you thought was good, how you felt about it, how it helped the team. Be sincere.

"Hey, Carol – just wanted to say I thought your design ideas for the new campaign were really good. I was impressed by your attention to detail. I think your efforts are going to really make a difference for the campaign."

The only thing better than being shown appreciation is having it done in front of other people. It casts a positive light on them, and gives others a chance to echo the thought.

There's a thing called **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**. Social Scientist Abraham Maslow found that there is a hierarchy to human needs; some things are more important to us than others. His list starts with the obvious essentials like air, water, food, and shelter. But the next most important thing for people to have is a sense of belonging. So help people feel like they belong. It will go a long way.

TIP: Look for ways to make people feel like they belong.

Reach out to the new person in the group and help them feel comfortable. Get them introduced, find something in common with them. Help them get oriented. They will be grateful

Be a good team player.

3. Reward the boss/people for trusting you.

TIP: Give a simple gift occasionally

Don't go crazy with this one or they might think you are trying to buy their friendship. But people like gifts, so give one. When someone on your team does something you like, get them a soda or a cup of coffee.

“Hey, I thought you did a great job on that presentation; nice work. Here, I got you a cup of coffee.”

Imagine what that person probably feels like?

You may not be in an official position to give formal rewards, but you still have the power to give. When you see people doing things you think are great, don't hesitate to show your appreciation.

A leader is someone who helps improve the lives of other people or improve the system they live under.
- Sam Houston

Be likeable

The five-dollar term for this one is Referent Power. It basically means that other people want to be like you. Someone with referent power is liked by his peers, they want to be like him and please him.

Part of this is charisma and personality, but it starts with the basics of behavior and character. Here are several things you can do to make yourself likeable and build up your referent power.

TIP: Be worthy of trust.

Keep confidences, be loyal to your friends, don't talk about others behind their backs. If you don't have something positive to say about someone, try not to say anything at all. Return stuff you borrow, without having to be asked.

TIP: Keep your promises.

Make a point of keeping your word every time. It is easy to say yes to people; you want to please them, and there is a short term reward for saying yes.

But balance this against the long term damage to both of you if you don't follow through. You are perceived as unreliable, lacking in judgement, possibly deceitful.

Don't say yes just to say yes; only say yes if you mean it; only promise what you know you can deliver. That might actually mean saying no sometimes. That's OK. It might not make them happy, but

"The art of leadership is saying no, not saying yes. It is very easy to say yes."

- Tony Blair

Try this instead:

TIP: Make it your policy to under-promise and over-deliver

There's nothing like coming through in a big way for the team to make you likeable. Do this frequently enough and you will develop a reputation as the person to get things done. This approach will also take a little pressure off of you.

If you think you can realistically deliver something in four days, tell them it will probably take five or six. If

TIP: Be tactfully honest.

You need to be straight with everyone, but that doesn't mean that you barge into the room and tell the boss that you think his shirt is ugly and he's got it on inside-out. All you have done is embarrass him and give him a reason to dislike you.

Try a different approach. Get him aside at the first opportunity and let him know privately that his shirt is on wrong. He'll thank you for letting him know.

Your opinion about his choice of shirts may not really be relevant, so best to say nothing at all. But if you have to say something, be helpful and constructive about it.

Remember, cutting corners here will come back to haunt you, it's better to go ugly early, come clean with the truth.

"If in doubt, start with the truth, and go from there."

TIP: Be respectful of everyone. Period.

Treating everyone respectfully as a person will make you likeable. Everyone has their differences, and the only person whose story you really know is your own.

Try not to make assumptions about others based on appearance; you don't know where they have been or what they have experienced. Take everyone as face value and proceed from the assumption that they are a reasonable human being who wants to belong, to matter, and to be accepted.

"In my walks, every man I meet is my superior in some way, and in that I learn from him."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Avoid talking bad about someone behind their backs.

3. Use your knowledge for the powers of good.

4. Make the leader look good. If you have some information or knowledge the leader ought to have, share it with him. Do it in a way that doesn't make him look stupid or uninformed, so mostly you can share it before the big meeting or even

"Hey boss, I just found out and thought you should be aware that X group is doing something..."

TIP: Share what you know to help the team.

It's one thing to know a lot of stuff about a lot of things. That makes you smart. When you can share it in a helpful way with the group, that makes you an influencer. The trick here is to do it in a way that benefits the group. They have to believe it's not about you showing off your knowledge, but about trying to make things go better.

Make others look good.

Be humble.

Team player – bring your best game every day.

TIP: Do something simple, unexpected, and nice for someone (without expectation that they will return the favor).

Example is Leadership

- Albert Schweitzer

Mentors, sources of information,
(later comes positional powers of reward, coerce, legitimate

Truth is powerful and it prevails.

- Sojourner Truth

The wicked leader is he who the people despise. The good leader is he who the people revere. The great leader is he who the people say, "We did it ourselves."

- Lao Tzu

I never thought in terms of being a leader. I thought very simply in terms of helping people.

- John Hume

All good leaders are connectors. They relate well and make people feel confident about themselves and their leader.

- John c. Maxwell

Conclusion to Lead Yourself

If you have developed the positive traits of a leader, you will find that people will respect you. As you develop your informal bases of power, you will naturally become more and more of an influencer in the process.

You don't have to have the "manger" name tag, or the corner office, or the clipboard and radio to start being a leader.

When it becomes obvious to the group that you are one of the best team players, most trusted, most experienced, the most dedicated to the goals of the group and the interests of its members, then you have become one of its leaders.

Keep it up and eventually you will find that formal leadership positions start becoming available to you. And when you do take on a formal leadership position, your life will be a whole lot easier because you already know how to be a leader – you have been doing it for a while.

I hope this book has been helpful to you. It doesn't promise overnight success, and you should be wary of anything that does. Nor does it say that the road will be smooth on your journey to leadership.

But if you are focused, apply yourself with discipline, and use the many tips here, you will find yourself closer and closer to being the leader you want to be.

About the Author

Ken is a 26 year veteran of the United States Army Infantry, where he rose to the rank of Colonel and had the honor and privilege of leading America's finest sons and daughters. From a 45-Soldier infantry platoon in the demilitarized zone on the Korean peninsula, his career culminated with leadership of a composite Task Force of several hundred people and a Combat Outpost in Iraq. In between, he had lots of other leadership experiences including training, recruiting, college level instruction, disaster relief, counter-drug operations, search and rescue, and of course some time working and leading in a staff and office environment.



He gives back by volunteering as Scoutmaster of a local Boy Scout troop. He is an Eagle Scout and has been involved with Scouting and leadership for over 17 years. He loves working with the youth of the troop and helping them get started on their leadership journey.

Ken Lives in central Pennsylvania with his wife of 22 years, and their two teenaged children. When he is not writing or shooting video for RapidStartLeadership.com, on outings with the Scouts, or on adventures with his family, you can often find him swimming, biking, and running in pursuit of his love of triathlon.

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