# 3-Point Evaluation for the Strength of Your Leadership

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Every leader has their own productive strengths, internal capacities, and external opportunities. That is part of what makes each of us unique. And within that, there is great freedom and importance to be yourself. With that said, however, there are three broad categories *all leaders* are measured in by those who follow them. Before we dig into those three areas of responsibility, I would like to acknowledge an important fact.

**All leaders are evaluated**...*Even those who resist it.*

> *(Evaluation is not the same as judgement. Evaluation is based on strengths with a bias of support and for improvement. Judgement is based on weakness with a bias for criticism or even condemnation.)* You may or may not have a formal annual review by a supervisor or a board of directors, but you are evaluated by those you *follow you*.

It is not always even a conscious process, but don't pretend it doesn't matter. It does not mean people are not grateful for your leadership; being assessed is just part of being a leader.

You are assessed on your:

- Decisions
- Words
- Attitudes
- Actions
- Results

The results of your evaluation range from the possibly surface sounding issue of whether or not someone likes you, to the deeper issues of whether or not that person actually trusts, respects, and follows you.

The danger in knowing you are evaluated is the potential for you to fall prey to performance or people-pleasing. Which, of course, are to be avoided at all costs. The best way to embrace the evaluation of your leadership by your company is to evaluate yourself first and more rigorously than your followers would.

The idea of your company evaluating you does not mean you report to everyone. Still, it does acknowledge that people make daily decisions of whether or not they will continue to follow your leadership.

Let's dive into the three broad categories of responsibility for which you are assessed for both capability and results.

## Categories of Leadership Responsibility:

### 1. Relational Savvy

Healthy, meaningful, and productive relationships always begin with connection, and that requires trust. I like the word "savvy" because it says so much. It includes confidence, knowledge, and ability. It provides perception and understanding. All of those ingredients are part of being self-aware as a leader.

The process works like this... **Heart...Connection...Trust...Follow**

Here is a brief summary of how these four words work together. If you lead with your heart, people can connect with you. If people connect with you, they will trust you, and if they trust you, they will follow you. If you read this process in reverse, it gains even greater clarity and insight.

> *People will not follow anyone they do not trust. They cannot trust someone they don't connect with, and they can't connect with someone with whom they cannot find their heart.*

Spiritual discernment is also a vital part of great relationships with people. This does not suggest you are constantly evaluating every word a person is saying. Remember, relationships are meant to be enjoyed. However, you will need to discern the nuances of what someone is saying in certain conversations, especially if you are basing a significant decision upon it.

**BONUS:** 10 Great Relationship Principles -John Maxwell

#### 1) We see people through our own lens.

> *Your self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-perception establish the foundation of all your relationships. The way you view yourself and the way you see life shapes how you see and relate to others. Whether you see the cup as half full or half empty will transfer every time.*

#### 2) People do not care how much you know, till they know how much you care.

> *``Caring about people is not automatic. Not everyone cares. I am sure you've run into people along the way that it's clear that they just don't care. You cannot learn to care, it's not a skill, but you can decide to care. You can ask God to help you become more caring. If you want to lead for the long-haul, it is not enough to be great at what you do. If you do not sincerely care about people and live in such a way that you demonstrate it, your leadership will suffer.*

#### 3) Listening from the heart is a game changer.

> *One of the greatest gifts you can give to anyone is to truly listen. We are often in a hurry, there is so much to do, right? So, when you slow down for a minute or an hour and truly listen, you communicate that you value that person. It can be life-changing for them. Listening from the heart requires the ability to make a soul level connection.*

*You communicate empathy, interest, and a desire to be helpful far more by listening than merely by your words.*

## 4) Believing the best in people usually brings out the best of people.

*Even a broken clock is right twice a day. Sorry, but I love that corny line because it is true! What you look for you will find. I was surprised one day when asked why pastors and people only say the good things about someone at their funeral. Why would you want to emphasize someone's shortcomings? We are all flawed and imperfect, but when someone calls out the best in us, we often rise to that higher standard.*

## 5) Hurting people hurt people.

*When the response to a situation is greater than the issue at hand, the real issue is always about something else. The wise leader learns how to get to the real issue. People who are hurting do not necessarily want to hurt people, but it's like a lion with a thorn in his paw, he can't help it. If we can help people take the thorn out, we can help them live better. In turn, if you are in a relationship with them, your life becomes better too.*

## 6) Admit wrongs and forgive quickly.

*Taking responsibility for your actions is core to healthy and productive relationships. If you make a mistake, own it. If you treat someone poorly, ask forgiveness. Getting defensive or bowing up never makes a relationship better. You might be right, but if you need to win, you will lose in the long run. When you are wronged, forgive quickly. You will live with less stress and enjoy life more fully.*

## 7) Always give more than you take.

*There may be a few people in your life that you think it's impossible to out give them. I understand that. John would be one of those people in my life. But that does not mean we should not purpose to be generous anyway. And with the majority of people, you will ever know, you can set your sights to give more than you take. However, this is not about a scorecard. If you keep track, you have missed the point. It is a heart level thing. It is a way of living, and when your motives are pure, it will bring you great joy.*

## 8) Add value to people.

*You can add value to people in simple ways and big ways. Adding value is no more complex than the idea of how you contribute to their life, so their life is better. It can be as simple as a kind and encouraging word, and it can be as involved as a lifetime of mentoring. Sometimes it involves enough love and courage to have a tough and honest conversation. The greatest value you can add to anyone is the message of Jesus Christ. The gift of eternal life is the greatest and highest value you can bring to someone.*

### 9) You can never encourage anyone too much.

*We both know the answer but let me ask anyway. Have you ever been encouraged too much by someone? Of course not. Whether it is your kids, an employee, volunteers at the church, a co-worker or your neighbor, take the time to give frequent and sincere encouragement. Your leadership will rise because of it.*

### 10) Trust is the lifeblood of all relationships.

*When it comes to a relationship, trust is like a promise. And you should never break a promise. In fact, that is the essence of trust. People are counting on you to keep your promises. This reflects your character and ultimately who you are. No reasonable person expects perfection, but they do expect honesty, kindness and doing what you say you will do.*

## 2. Strategic Execution

The people who follow your leadership not only want to know where you are going, but also that you know how to get them there. My family knows that I am notoriously poor with directions while driving. I start thinking and talking, and sure enough, I miss the exit! And whenever I think we should turn left; it *always* should have been right.

My best intentions and good relationships are not enough to get us where we are supposed to arrive. While very few people want to see charts and graphs, they all want to know you have a plan and that you are consistently working your plan.

"Strategy makes progress believable. Vision unites the team and strategy aligns the team. Alignment is the process by which the leaders and the people come together in agreement about how they will realize the vision. The vision represents the why, and the strategy encompasses the what and how."

What if you are a good leader but not a good organizer? For example, you may be good with people and a strong communicator. That is great, but unfortunately not enough. There is good news for you. The good news is that if you are not great with strategic plans, you can ask others to help you.

To get you started, here are a few important questions for you.

- Who is the point leader?
- Who is on the team?
- How are decisions made?
- What are the key objectives and the preferred timeline?
- What are the obstacles in your path?
- What resources required?
- How will you review and measure progress and determine success?

## 3. Inspirational Approach

The responsibility to inspire is not reserved only for the president and a few leaders at the top of the organization. All leaders must inspire. The good news is that you can inspire people your own way making the most of your personality and strengths.

Keep in mind that the majority of the time you inspire others is not while standing on a stage before a large crowd, it is more often one to one and small groups and is connected to how you live. Of course, what you actually say matters, but your actions are much more powerful than your words. If your life contradicts your words, you will not inspire anyone.

Whether you are casting vision to your board, or one staff member or a small group of volunteers, who you are, and how you say what you say matters. You may be a leader who inspires others because you have a big personality, and you are a great communicator. That is wonderful.

But what if that is *not* you? You may be like many leaders who inspire through your relationships because you are just really good with people. Or you may inspire because you are so organized! Does organization actually inspire people? Absolutely! Remember, people hate chaos and love progress!

You will need some relational back up just like the relational leader needs some strategic backup, but the point is to lean into your own style of inspiring others.