

Say What You Mean: The Language of Leadership



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Note: This is a sampling of excerpts from some of the lessons found in *Say What You Mean: The Language of Leadership*. To order the full version, click here:

<http://artofeloquence.com/store/leadership/SWMLL>

Chapter 1: What's So Great About Leadership Skills?

"Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety."-Proverbs 11:14

Leadership is all the buzz right now. Most people think it's an important quality to cultivate, but have you stopped to think about why that is? Leadership is more than a buzz word. It's more than a success tip. Leaders inspire people. Leaders bring out the best in others. Leaders build up and leaders get things done!

Dwight D. Eisenhower said, *"Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it."* Why is it significant that the other guy *wants* to do it? Because people will always work harder, longer and more passionately when they believe in the cause!

What kinds of things can leaders get done? A parent can inspire his children to be their best, to do their best, to give their best, to be a leader of men, to serve others and to fulfill their God-given mission for their lives. A parent who leads by fear doesn't produce secure adults. A parent, who is a weak leader doesn't give a child the security he needs to be a confident adult. A parent who leads without educating doesn't assure his child of understanding. A parent who doesn't lead by example doesn't provide stability. A parent who leads without consistency will soon find his authority challenged.

An employee can inspire subordinates, serve the company, bring about new advancements and further his career. An employee who doesn't demonstrate leadership skills will not be considered for a supervisory or managerial position as it requires leadership skills. An employee without leadership skills will find that his proposals are met with resistance. An employee without leadership skills may find that he is passed over for a raise or promotion.

With leadership skills, a business owner can better serve his customers, inspire employees or downline, advance market share, build the company's reputation and develop confidence in its investors. But a business owner without leadership skills will find that few believe in his vision!

A leader can more effectively reach others for the Kingdom of God and accomplish the missions the Lord has for his life! For a mission to be fulfilled, a vision and leadership skills are required. An unbeliever will find it hard to come to faith through someone who doesn't display confidence.

Though there are many followers in the world, one cannot follow unless someone leads. Ladies, have you ever danced with someone who really didn't know how to lead? How'd that work out for ya? How many toes did you lose?

God's Kingdom needs Godly leaders! In order to fulfill these missions, a Godly leader needs to understand what a leader really is. Not only does he need to understand the mission and what is required, but he needs to be able to convey its benefits to others and the fact that he is capable of leading others to that destination.

Human beings long for leaders, rules and direction. It's part of our nature. We look for them everywhere, in our family life, our work place and our spiritual life. Studies show that children need boundaries in order to feel safe. Without leadership, very little would be accomplished and chaos would naturally follow. Anarchy produces chaos because no one is in charge, but on the other hand, you've

heard the term “Too many cooks spoil the broth.” This is the chaos that ensues when there are too many leaders.

Throughout history people have searched for leaders. Many times, bad leadership was accepted because they didn't see the alternative. In fact, that's what a lot of people tell me about the political process. It's more a matter of voting for the lesser of two evils! (Insert snarky giggle here!)

Now here's an example of what happens when there is no leader present with the people. After the Lord had sent Moses to free the Israelites from Pharaoh, they were left alone with Aaron while Moses went to the mountain to be with the Lord for further instruction. What happened?

“And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me.

And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron.

And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD.

And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves:” –Exodus 32:1-7

In the following pages we will explore what a leader really is, what it takes to be a Godly leader, tips and techniques for conveying leadership to others, what it takes to gain a leadership position and the skills you need to be an effective leader.

Leadership Assignment:

Take inventory of the people you think are great leaders. What qualities do they have? Write them down and begin to compare them to the lessons in this ebook.

Also, you might want to take our Communication Assessment Quiz:

<http://artofeloquence.com/articles/communication-quiz/>

Chapter 4: Why a Leader Needs Communication Skills

*"He who loves a pure heart and whose speech is gracious will have the king for his friend."
-Proverbs 22:11*

So now you know that a leader isn't just someone with that "certain something" called charisma. You also know he is not just a top banana who runs around barking orders at his underlings. And you know that a true leader has to have certain character qualities that are sought out by both the church and the secular world. But there is one more thing leaders need: communication skills!

What most people don't understand is that a leader isn't a leader until someone believes in him. In order for someone to believe in him, a leader must communicate that he is worthy of being followed! Okay, so now he's conveyed his qualifications and he's been given the opportunity. He's a leader. He's got the job, the power and the responsibility. Now what?

What's the one most important thing a leader needs in order to continue leading? You're catching on! He needs communication skills! He needs the language of leadership! Why? A leader needs to communicate his plan. A leader needs to tell people what he's going to do. A leader must direct and maintain his followers' confidence or they will begin to lose faith that he will effectively lead them where they need to go, especially during the inevitable tough times! If he doesn't, that leader will eventually be replaced.

A leader must appear confident for it is not enough that he IS confident that he is the right man for the job. He must constantly demonstrate this confidence in his ability and his plans for the project, company or nation which he is leading. Confidence involves the way you speak and the way you carry yourself. We'll get into the details of how this is done in a later chapter. For now I want you to take a look into the lives of two very different men, Bob Bashful and Carl Confidence.

Bob Bashful has been a valued employee of Acme Widgets Inc. for over 25 years. He knows just about everything there is to know about Acme and about widgets and he is a good "Company Man." He's has many of the 16 Biblical qualities of a leader and he is someone the other employees find helpful and kind. Bob is well liked by all. Unfortunately, nobody sees Bob as a leader. Though he is often the "go to guy" when folks need something, he is often passed up for promotion. He has the highest salary of anyone at his level in the entire company. In fact, Acme made a special rule raising the salary ceiling of those at that level, just for him!

Bob has longed to be given a leadership role in the company and has often asked his supervisors and managers why he was never given the chance to prove he could lead. He was told that they didn't see him as a leader. Bob would often question what they meant by that, but most often his managers wouldn't be able to put their finger on it. They just felt that his leadership was too much of a gamble and that they couldn't afford to gamble on the future of the company and the investors, employees and customers that depended upon them.

The more time that went by, the more both management and employees saw Bob as a follower and the less they expected to see him in a leadership role. One day an opening became available and Bob's name came up. The company struggled to dismiss Bob one more time because he was such a good employee. They finally decided to give Bob his

shot. They agreed to give Bob a trial in the position for three months. Bob was overjoyed.

His fellow employees were happy for Bob, but they secretly didn't think he would be able to handle the job. They refrained from too exuberant a "congratulations" because they were fairly certain Bob would be right back at their level in three months' time. This made Bob's job as supervisor even more difficult since everyone was looking for him to fail; not wishing for him to fail, but expecting it. They were hoping to see him win, but that hope depended upon a huge change in Bob's speech and in how he carried himself. A slight change would not be enough to convince the company that Bob was the right man for this leadership position right now.

As the months went on, Bob began to talk about his plans for the company, but they were not very well received. His ideas were good but folks just didn't think he could carry them out. Bob didn't make a very strong impression and his ideas were frequently shot down either as being too farfetched or not enough of a change to make a difference. Bob just couldn't find a way to make anyone believe in his ideas or in his ability to lead them to a profitable conclusion.

Neither Bob nor anyone else in the company could put their finger on why, but they just didn't believe in his ideas or his abilities as a leader. After three months, Acme Widgets Inc. hired someone from the outside to head up this department and Bob was right back where he started.

Communication skills are not taught in most schools. Oh, Speech and Debate are sometimes touched on, but general communication skills are considered "fluff" or "unimportant". So it isn't surprising that nobody, not even his managers were able to determine what the problem was. Bob's problem was that he didn't understand how to communicate to his bosses and his employees that he was worth following! Now let's look at Carl Confidence.

During the three-month trial under Bob's leadership, Acme found Carl's resume online. He was desperate for a job because he had been out of work for a while due to downsizing. However, Carl understood what Bob did not. He understood that what Acme was looking for was an effective leader. Where Bob had a distinct advantage, Carl was greatly lacking so he studied up about Acme's history as a company and did some research on the widget industry and how today's economy and competition was affecting market share. There was a lot Carl needed to learn, but he only had a short time as Acme had called him in for an interview in just two days!

During a series of seven interviews over a period of three weeks, Carl managed to completely impress the management staff. They were impressed that he had taken the time to get to know their company because they had interviewed so many who didn't even know what a widget was! They were a bit concerned at his lack of experience with the widget industry and the fact that he was brand new to the company, as well. However, his confidence and leadership skills made such an impression on everyone that they gave him the job.

Carl also had his work cut out for him because nobody knew who Carl was. They didn't know what to expect and some, who were very loyal to Bob, were upset that a stranger took over "Bob's position" and saw Bob as having been demoted. Carl understood this and set about the task of explaining his vision for the company, his experience and his heart for them. He

explained very clearly what he wanted done, praised success, gave credit where it was due, lifted up his superiors and allowed his employees to shine!

Carl created a team effort where everyone was actively working towards a common goal. Everyone felt a part of something important and bigger than themselves. Everyone did his best because all saw the benefit and were willing to share in the struggles.

In very short order, Carl was beloved by his employees. His superiors were impressed, not only with Carl, but with the entire department! Carl even made some of the same changes that Bob had suggested! However, the way Carl had communicated those changes evoked more understanding and confidence than had been afforded to Bob.

Even Bob had to admit that Carl was a great guy who had a flair for leadership. Bob couldn't put his finger on it, but he knew that Carl had something he didn't have. Carl had that "certain something" and Bob just chalked it up to the fact that some people have charisma and some people don't.

What Carl had, that "certain something," that charisma, is effective communication skills. Bob may not have been able to put his finger on it, but he, like you, is perfectly capable of learning it!

Since most people don't understand how important communication skills are to a leader and many can't identify what they are or how to achieve them, I am going to break them down for you in the following chapters. Along the way, I'll give you tips in each area so that you (and Bob), like Carl, can communicate that you are someone worth following!

Chapter 6: How to Package Yourself as a Leader

“He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.” -Isaiah 33:15-16

As I pointed out earlier, it's not enough that you possess the qualities of a leader. You need to communicate in such a way that those you would be leading know you have those qualities and that you are, therefore, worthy to be followed. How do you do communicate that you have the qualities with which to lead? Part of learning the language of leadership is understanding that most people think of leadership as a complete package.

Let's say you are looking to buy a pair of earrings for your mom's birthday. You see two identical pairs of earrings at two different stores. They are both the same price and they both are something you just know she will adore. The only difference is that one of the stores offers free gift wrapping and the other doesn't. The first store would put the earrings in one of those expensive-looking, black velvet, cushioned boxes. Then they would take that velvet box and put it inside this sturdy satin-lined box, wrap it in good quality wrapping paper and tie it with a matching fabric ribbon and bow. The second store hands you the earrings which are attached to a plastic card inside a thin plastic bag with their store name on it. Which one says you cared enough to buy the very best?

Just as we judge a product by more than just the way it functions, people judge a leader by more than just what he says. It's not just that someone speaks like a leader; he must present the image of a great leader. A leader's image involves things like the way he dresses, the way he walks, talks, carries himself, his character, his clarity and the way he handles difficulties.

The world judges a great leader according to how closely he fits their idea of what a leader is. Remember that in order to be an effective leader, you need much more than the packaging, but since this is a large part of what the world expects of its leaders, this is what you have to communicate in order to gain and maintain a leadership position. Here are the most important things people expect of great leaders:

1. Communicate that you are a leader

People expect a leader to appear to be an open book. Let people see the real you, struggling to make good decisions, taking things into account, transparent, holding yourself accountable, even making mistakes as long as they're not big ones! Being human and having faults makes you believable.

2. Play up your strengths while you work on your weaknesses

Be true to who you are! Don't try to be someone else. If you are a natural goofball, be a bit gregarious. If you are an organized list maker, show them your charts! Have fun with it!

Chapter 9: The Voice of Leadership

*“Hear; for I will speak of excellent things;
and the opening of my lips shall be right things.” –Proverbs 8:6*

Your voice is one more communication tool at your disposal that will help you communicate that you are a leader worthy of following. Most people overlook many of these valuable features God gave your voice to help you convey who you are and what you can do as a Godly leader. Learn to harness the power of your voice and you will increase your ability to speak excellent things. I have a list of dos and don'ts for you.

Do:

- Use a friendly tone when speaking with others.
- Speak with strength that comes from a position of righteousness and not greed or ego.
- Be unwavering and uncompromising in the truth
- Speak loudly enough so that people can hear you without having to strain.
- Speak with energy!
- Speak in a lively and animated way and vary your tone so that your sound is interesting to the ear.
- Use your character, humor or any accent which makes you unique.
- Speak at a moderate pace or speed such that people have time to understand you.
- Slow down your speech if you have such a heavy accent that people find it hard to understand you.

Chapter 11: How to Communicate Confidently, Even When You're NOT!

*"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power,
and of love, and of a sound mind." -2 Timothy 1:7*

If your knees knock and your insides do the "Dance of the Butterflies" at the thought of a leadership position, know that you can learn to be an effective and Godly leader with the instruction this book has provided. Let me assure you that there is nothing in this ebook you cannot learn! I know. I know because I was once a painfully shy young girl who never thought she'd lead anything or anyone! And if I can do it, absolutely ANYONE can!

Remember that God doesn't always call the qualified, but He always qualifies the called! Just as we saw with Moses and as you saw even with me, God prepares those He has called to lead His people in whatever work He has for them. This is part of that preparation for you.

If you are uneasy about a leadership position, but you know God is calling you there, it might be because you are afraid that, at some point, you will have to make the tough decision to do something that is unpopular and you are not at all sure how you could "sell it." There comes a time when most leaders will be called upon to take on a difficult task. How do we present something that is hard or stressful or even painful in a way that gains support?

Well, you're not going to like this, but I have to tell you the hard truth. Not all unpopular decisions can be put in a way that will be well received by all. In fact, there may be some who resent what you might have to do, but there are a few techniques you can use that will usually bring the majority around to support you, even if they are unhappy about it.

However, there are some simple things a leader can do that will help him lead confidently, even if he is not:

2. Focus on the positives

Most people understand that life happens. They realize that the world isn't a fairy tale and that they'll have to tighten their belts or tough something out on occasion. What they need is a strong leader to get them through the tough times. They want to know there is a light at the end of that tunnel. They want to follow someone who's not afraid to get dirty.

Remember that during WWII, many Americans had to do without certain things because they were needed by the war effort. For the most part, they didn't mind because they kept their eyes on the prize. They felt like what they were doing mattered and that the hard times would soon be over.

Focus on the positives. Tell them where they are headed, how fast they will get there and what life will be like after all the hardships are over. Tell them how their sacrifice will make a difference and how you need everyone's cooperation to ensure the success of the project. They need to feel like they are doing something worthwhile that won't last forever. Make them feel part of a team effort.

Look back at the differences between how Bob and Carl handled the overtime issue. Who was the one who made the team feel special, empowered and hopeful?

4. The greater the doubt, the more you sing out!

Just a slogan I made up to illustrate some techniques for dealing with fears in leadership. Again I never said you wouldn't or shouldn't have doubts and fears. I just said you shouldn't show them. So how do we do that?

What makes a person look confident? As I discussed in earlier chapters, taking longer strides when you walk, purposeful gesturing, smiling, holding your head up, standing up straight. What makes a person sound confident? Speaking clearly, loudly.

Did you know that you can actually control the shakiness of your voice and you do it the opposite way you may think? Most folks who are nervous speak softly because they think the nervousness will only be magnified with the volume. WRONG! Any singer will tell you that it is MUCH more difficult to maintain a note by singing softly. That's why lots of sopranos belt it out! Instead of squeaking out that high note, they BELT IT! Why? Because they know the secret. They know that the louder the voice, the more stable it is.

The same is true for your knees knocking. Walk softly and you have a tendency to wobble. Walk a bit more quickly or with more purpose and your knees don't have time to knock! Make large gestures or quick gestures and your hands won't look like they are shaking. So your knees can be knocking all they want on the inside as long as nobody notices on the outside!

The beauty of all this is that you have time to appear confident even when you are still nervous! The really cool part of this is that when you begin to look less nervous, you begin to FEEL less nervous. See, part of the nervousness is just the fear of looking nervous. Once you realize you don't LOOK nervous, your confidence level will soar!

Chapter 15: Handling the Hecklers and Naysayers

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." - Philippians 4:13

Handling hecklers and naysayers may seem like a daunting and intimidating task. With a little practice, you can be a pro at handling these situations with confidence and humility. I have some dos and don'ts for answering your critics.

Don't:

Get even

It's human nature to want to lash out when they are challenged or hurt. Avoid the temptation to do this and you will avoid more strife. Most people respect those who are civil, even if they disagree.

Use sarcasm

Sarcasm should only be used with great finesse and humility or not at all! Too often sarcasm is interpreted as a lack of respect for the other or his views. Sarcasm is usually answered with even more sarcasm and it is a never-ending cycle of disrespect.

Get visibly upset

The more riled you appear, the more they know they've gotcha! If you get upset about a critical comment others may take that as weakness in your character or in your position. Jesus was challenged but never got ruffled. He knew where He stood and what was what. If you have conviction in your position, just hang on to it. Speak with respect about the facts and stick to what you know is right.

Get angry

This is similar to getting upset and getting even. Getting angry at someone who challenges you only makes them wonder what else they can do to you. Just answer their objection and move on.

Use extremes

Be careful not to overstate your objectives or go to extremes to prove your point. State the facts of what you know but don't exaggerate! Exaggeration only gets you into trouble when folks begin to pick your argument apart.

Beg

Don't beg others to listen to you as that comes from a position of weakness. If they won't quiet down, find some way to get their attention before you begin speaking. Try speaking softly so they will have to quiet down in order to hear what you say.

Answer

Some questions don't require an answer. You may have heard, "I won't dignify that with a response." Some questions have no diplomatic answer. Some questions are simply designed to trap a leader into a negative response, no matter how he answers the question. If this is the type of question being asked, you can simply not answer, say you aren't going to answer it or say why you aren't going to answer it.

"I'm not going to answer that because it doesn't have a yes or no answer. The issue is much more complicated than that and we don't have time to get into that now."

Helpful Resources

JoJo's Articles:

<http://artofeloquence.com/articles>

On this page of our site you'll find a collection of JoJo's best articles spanning various topics and all age ranges. This page is constantly being updated so check back often!

JoJo's Blog:

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