

The 5 Levels of Leadership Assessment and Paper

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Campus Location: Alliance University

Course Title: Spiritual Formation Capstone

SF703

Spring 2023

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March 8, 2023

## **Introduction**

When one thinks about the concept of leadership, there are various significant pointers which can come to mind. Maxwell, however, takes the time to not only clarify the definition and applicability of the term leadership, but also how it should be characterized and utilized in what is discussed and presented to others. “Because everything rises and falls on leadership. If you want to make a positive impact on the world, learning to lead better will help you do it” (Maxwell, 2011, 1). As presented by Maxwell, the following are the 5 levels of leadership one can reference as they seek to ascertain which one best describes their current level of leadership: level 1: position, level 2: permission, level 3: production, level 4: people development, and level 5: the pinnacle. After reviewing what was presented by Maxwell in regards to the different levels and as a result of taking the assessment, the one which I presently align to and epitomizes is that of level 3 leadership.

### **What does this show me as a leader of others?**

As discussed by Maxwell, there are certain characteristics which are denoted and exemplified in connected to level 3 leadership distinction. One of those is that of maintaining my credibility with those I lead. My current credibility status is not the result of a one-time event but it has however been cultivated and fostered over time. This has involved me demonstrating to others that I am trustworthy, reliable, and honest as it pertains to conversation and interaction with them. Another noted aspect in support of the level 3 criteria is that of me being an exemplary model of setting the standard for others to follow. This has been evident both by the comments shared by others and their willingness to follow my lead on matters.

It was interesting for me to read and also personally identify with many of the other aspects which were listed in connection to level 3 leadership. One of those was solving a multitude of problems at the same time. As I have continued to work with others, multi-tasking and responding to different crises or conflicting situations or problems has been a normal pattern of my daily life. I have found that while we are navigating through the issues, I had to ensure that clarity as it pertains to our understanding of the vision and the momentum to get there remained intact. Another important aspect of me exercising level 3 leadership for production is that of promoting team-work and team-building efforts. I view this as being foundational not just to achieving progress but also to encourage comradery and networking of those involved as well.

### **What is my leadership style?**

My leadership style is that of an encourager of others but also a diligent facilitator in terms of things being accomplished. My leadership style also includes striving to demonstrate the importance of the vision being shared by all. I also incorporate into my leadership style the need to express my gratitude for the individual contributions of others towards success being achieved. I realize at times that this has and will continue to require my committed involvement towards fostering an environment which promotes teamwork and team building. My leadership style also incorporates striving to collectively maintaining our commitment to holistic wellness of all. My focus is for this to be an engaging, enriching but also productive process for all of us to experience.

### **What are the checks and lessons God is teaching me?**

“Production qualifies and separates true leaders from people who merely occupy leadership positions. Good leaders always make things happen. They get results. Not only are

they productive individually, but they also are able to help the team produce” (Maxwell, 2013, 133). It was interesting to review what was shared that becoming a Level 1 leader can be considerably easier than progressing to the other levels. For one to progress from that point forward requires commitment and persistent efforts. At church and in my secular employment, I have fulfilled level 1 positions leadership in different capacities.

While I am in the process of maintaining where I am as well as progressing to the next level has involved God utilizing different items as part of my teaching and learning enrichment. They have served to not only be instrumental as lessons learned opportunities but also providing the “checks and balances” in my life. Some of the areas in which He has checked me is not to forget the noted areas or topic points which correlate to Level 1 and 2 leadership criteria or characteristics. An example of this is to not forget what is denoted in the previous levels of maintaining a right attitude in my interaction with others. God’s check on my life has also encompasses me being mindful of continuing to practice care and candor as to how I relate to others. Also included in the checks and lessons which God has me currently focusing on as a level 3 leader is taking the time for self-awareness. To help with my awareness, God also utilizes my wife, mentors, colleagues in ministry, friends, other family members and those I work with to assist in checking me and identifying my blind spots as well.

### **What are some of my blind spots which have been identified by others?**

There is often an image which one can have of themselves based upon their own perception, beliefs or personal convictions or assessments. There however exists the possibility of either validation of their conclusions or another perspective from others being shared back to them. What also can exist some items which be best classified as blind-spots to an individual. As I seek to grow and develop in my leadership abilities, it is good and actually necessary to request

and consider the feedback of others as to potential blind spots which could possibly be impactful to my effectiveness and progress as a leader. I reached out to three who I work with in ministry, three of my friends and ultimately my wife as well for insight and constructive considerations regarding the blind spots in my life.

As it pertains to blind spots in my soul, there were a few that were highlighted in the feedback which I received from my wife, 3 ministry leaders and 3 close friends. The following are the top 7 which they mentioned: 1) Refrain from at times allowing domineering characteristics of others to bother me. 2) Realize that my voice matters even when I feel that it won't make that much of a difference. 3) Press into my spiritual disciplines daily to help in my interactions with others. 4) Don't underestimate myself when it comes to ministry challenges and situations. 5) Don't waver in trusting the Holy Spirit's guidance within me. 6) Be confident and don't box myself into particular categories of ministries. 7) Be careful that my caring attitude to others does not become an opportunity for distraction in regards to my own personal development. Sometimes, "No" is an appropriate response.

I reflected on what they identified as blind spots in my soul. I thought about the fact that although I can be outspoken in some settings, I can also be timid, reserved and not assertive at other times. I must increasingly pray to God to help me in this area of my life. I want to believe in and exhibit 2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV) – “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”

As it pertains to blind spots in my leadership, the following are the seven key points which were mentioned: 1) Remember that self-care and family time are just as important as ministry assignments and obligations. 2) Make sure that my facial expressions and body posture are exuding confidence as I minister or function as a leader. 3) Be careful of at times committing

myself to more tasks than I am able to truly handle with excellence. 4) Be unapologetic in speaking and seeking for the truth when uncomfortable situations arise. 5) Take the time to slow down when I speak to ensure that nothing gets lost in translation/communication. 6) Accept help and ask for help when needed. Don't try to always do things on my own. 7) Take the time to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. Words are not always necessary. As a leader there are times when your presence will be more impactful than your words.

I also spent time reflecting on the blind spots in my leadership, which they identified. I realized that at times I can be tunnel-vision in my approach, reaction and interaction. This has especially occurred when I view whatever it may be as a time-sensitive matter. Based upon their feedback, I will have to more intentional about taking time to pause, slow down, and to be still.

### **What are my strengths and weaknesses identified in the process?**

“A lot of things have to be right to climb to a higher level, but sometimes it takes only one thing going wrong to cause someone to fall” (Maxwell, 2013, 14). One of my strengths and as noted by Maxwell for level 3 leaders is that “ Level 3 leaders take their people to where they want them to go, they don't send them there” (Maxwell, 2013, 136). I remain committed to ensuring that those I lead or interact are assured of my support and partnering with them as we progress. Another of my strengths is that of being consistently credible in what I say, do, and in my reaction and responses. A subsequent strength is my willingness to be involved and not aloof when scenarios or situations arises for difficult decisions arises.

Another one of my strengths which I will mention is seeking God's guidance as I explore and understand how my personal contributions assists in promoting and advancing the vision of what we are a part of or advancing. I must also take the time to take note of some of my

weaknesses which exist. One of my weaknesses is that I often inadvertently carry the burden of what we are collectively seeking to accomplish until that occurs. Another weakness is that at times I am neglectful in regards to relationships and what is occurring in the lives of individuals. My focus to achieving success sometimes results in me not always engaging in expressing concern or interest in the lives of others.

### **Where do I see myself in the ministry maturing process?**

As stated by Maxwell, “Your leadership ability today is whatever it is. You can’t change the past. However, you can change the future. You have a choice concerning your leadership ability from this day forward” (Maxwell, 2013, 17). There are certain skills and leadership abilities which I have acquired or adapted to as via God’s direction in my life. As I consider my ministry maturing process and progress, I prayerfully seek for God’s guidance as to the next steps towards increasingly being utilized in my interaction and relationship with others. I however do not see myself plateauing at this level. Where I see myself in the ministry maturing process is that of progressing towards level 4 leadership.

Advancing to a level 4 leader will require enhanced involvement on my part in the training and development of others. I presently seek to ensure the familiarity of others with what we are engaging in. This will entail also exploring additional resources and opportunities for their advancement. I must also be willing to provide timely and honest feedback to others. Giving such feedback can potentially require me to increasingly exit from my comfort zone of not having to transparently share my views of others. My maturing in this ministry process might also entail me striving to provide others with responsibilities and opportunities to stretch them. My scripture of reference which I must conscientiously personalize, observe, and follow is Proverbs 3: 6 (KJV) – “In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.”

## **Bibliography**

Maxwell, John C. *The 5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximize Your Potential*. New York: Center Street. 2013.