

# LEADERS GROWING LEADERS

Insights from John Maxwell  
Certified Team Members

by Jamy Bechler



*“A leader is one who know the way,  
goes the way and shows the way.”*

**John C. Maxwell**

Five years ago, John Maxwell began training and certifying leaders across the globe. This was important because Maxwell is considered the #1 leadership expert in the world. He has written more than 100 books.

As a college basketball coach for nearly 20 years, I constantly talked to my teams about the John Maxwell books I was reading and the leadership principles that I was learning. His concepts of team work and adding value to one another were so appropriate to our teams. However, as I have progressed as a leader, I have grown to understand that his principles can apply to anyone in any field.

Earlier I mentioned that Maxwell began certifying leaders to teach his principles. That is important because I kept making excuses for all of those years why I wouldn't get certified...I don't have the time...I don't have the money...I am not a good enough leader. Finally, after meeting with a corporate leader in my area that had just finished the training, I decided to jump in with both feet. It has proven to be a great decision.

The John Maxwell Team is made up of leaders all over the globe. I have met great people from Indiana to Singapore to Nigeria. There are many different reasons for joining the team but everyone believes in Maxwell and his philosophies of adding value to others. His organization employs a teaching faculty that is as good as it gets. I have listened to speakers and coaches from all over the country. Maxwell's faculty is top-notch.

Christian Simpson, Ed DeCosta, Melissa West, Roddy Galbraith, Scott Fey and Paul Martinelli are world-class teachers and practitioners of leadership. They are world-class leaders. They desire to grow more leaders to help change the world for the better. Everyone that joins the team is interested in becoming a better leader and the faculty helps us grow.

In the pages that follows, a collection of team members shares their insights on leadership. If you truly desire to be a better leader and grow your influence, then it makes sense to learn from people who have been directly influenced by the top leadership expert, John Maxwell. "Leadership is influence...nothing more, nothing less" is one of John Maxwell's core tenets. Each of us desires to be a positive influence on the world around us. Learning from the best has equipped us to do just that.

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## WHAT GREAT LEADERS AND SALESPEOPLE HAVE IN COMMON

God gave us 2 ears and 1 mouth. I think He expected us to listen twice as much as we speak.

As a Certified John Maxwell Coach and Speaker, I have learned a lot of principles from John. I will never forget sitting in the Certification Class a few feet from the stage where John Maxwell was teaching over 1400 people when he said something that hit me like a ton of bricks. John said, "People need to Listen to learn instead of Listening to reply."

As a Sales Trainer and Consultant I realized that today too many managers and salespeople believe they have all of the answers and that they need to share those answers with everyone regardless of what the people around them are saying. These people only listen to respond. They either interrupt the other person or impatiently listen but only with the intent to respond with the answer they already have conjured up in their mind.

Great Salespeople and great Leaders are great listeners. Great Salespeople and great Leaders know "People don't care what we know, until they know that we care." People know we care when we ask questions and we listen to learn. Great Salespeople and Leaders listen with the intent to learn and they ask great questions. They are listening to learn the needs and concerns of the person or people they are talking with.

Great Salespeople and great Leaders understand that we hear with our ears and we listen with our heart. Think about the people you love to be around. I bet they are people who are great listeners. They want to know what is going on in your life and they want to hear about your joys and your concerns. A Great Salesperson or Great Leader makes you feel good about yourself.

Are you looking to become a better Salesperson or a better Leader? If so begin to practice being a better listener. The Top Performers in the world are great listeners but they weren't born that way. They learned how to listen and how to listen to learn vs. listening just to respond. Take a good look at yourself, are you a good listener? If so, then I know you will be in total agreement with this article. If not, it is not too late to become a good listener. Start by not responding until the other person has finished. Then think about what they said and why they said it. Only then do you respond and if you want to be a Great Salesperson or a Great Leader, ask them a question about what they said. Then that person will know that you care about them.

*"Everything rises and falls on leadership." (John C. Maxwell)*

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## CHANGE IS INEVITABLE; GROWTH IS OPTIONAL

The world is always changing. We are always learning more and more. Technology is ever-changing. Athletes are getting bigger, faster, stronger.

Your ability to adapt to situations can lead to a higher level of success. As a coach, I was faced with hundreds of decisions each game. Some of them I was prepared for but many of them I was not. I had to be ready to change course if need be. That is life.

Did your car break down at an inopportune time? Did you get a promotion, demotion, pay raise, or lose out on a bonus? Did a family member get sick? Did you change jobs? What happened today that you didn't expect when you woke up?

When I wake up in the morning, I know that I don't know what will happen that day. Life is full of curve balls. Change is inevitable. How will you handle change?

When bad things happen, do you become bitter or better? When good things happen, do you take advantage of the opportunities? Do you see the possibilities that life constantly throws at you? Growth is not always fun but it is rewarding. The world is changing; will you adapt? Are you embracing change? Are you seeking growth?

*"As a leader, the first person I need to lead is me. The first person that I should try to change is me." (John C. Maxwell)*

*"People don't care what you know until they know what you care"*  
(John C. Maxwell)

*"The difference between average people and achieving people is their perception of and response to failure." (John C. Maxwell)*

# RUDY LOPEZ

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## YOUR BEST STORY

In 2011 I was facing a health scare where the worst case scenario represented that I could only live 3-5 more years. I was just 40 years old. This news represented that all the dreams and plans I had for the future were likely not going to happen, like living the kind of life people want to enjoy after retirement, or doing the activities they want to get involved in after they finish paying off the mortgage and their kids' college education. So I asked myself, am I living the life I want to live? Am I creating the memories that I want people to have of me? Since the answer was no, I decided to change my life. Thankfully, my health issues are not the worst case scenario, and I am very grateful for the insights gained during that time.

In his book "Intentional Living", John Maxwell says that is not enough to be a storyteller of significance. We are to be story lovers! When you take responsibility for your story and intentionally live a life of significance you will reaffirm your values, find your voice, develop your character, and experience inner fulfillment while focusing on helping others. We go beyond dreaming; we work intentionally every day to make a difference. Go ahead and start living today your best story!

*"When the leader lacks confidence, the followers lack commitment."*

(John C. Maxwell)

*"The leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way."*

(John C. Maxwell)

*"The measure of a leader is not the number of people who serve him but the number of people he serves." (John C. Maxwell)*

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## THE LAW OF PROCESS

### REFLECTION

In this age of instant gratification, leadership eludes many who quit upon experiencing failure/challenges. I see this in some of my students who do not take responsibility when they fail to meet a deadline or when they do lousy on a test. As a parent, I have become more accepting about letting my son experience disappointment and am not quick to “rescue” since I see (and have experienced) the benefits of learning from failures/challenges in life. To be a leader is to be extraordinary; which is to live out-of-the-ordinary and do what others do not do since it requires discipline, hunger for wisdom, knowledge and integrity – not easy.

The Phases of Leadership Growth were excellent. The Phase I of Leadership Growth I found to be key...all human-beings have areas that we *don't know* that we *don't know about*. Some people never care to know; others become curious and seek to learn. This realization is simple yet profound – the stepping stone to growth...

Maxwell also states that “the secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for when his time comes”. This is really interesting because who of us knows when that will be. The key is to live in the “present”, making moment by moment choices which will shape our future.

### APPLICATION

The question that Maxwell was asked is a great one: “what is your plan for personal growth?” His response “to make it a practice to read books, listen to tapes, and go to conferences on leadership” is one that I want to take on to a deeper level. I currently practice reading and listening to podcasts, and am planning to attend at least one leadership conference per year.

In the interest of continuous growth in my leadership, I have created and launched a podcast: Master Leadership, which takes listeners on a journey to greater significance as we Master Leadership together. It is featured on iTunes and can also be accessed on my website: [www.masterleadership.org](http://www.masterleadership.org).

*“Small disciplines repeated with consistency every day lead to great achievements gained slowly over time.” (John C. Maxwell)*

# JOYCE MCMURRAN

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## CONNECTING GOES BEYOND WORDS

In John Maxwell's book, *Everyone Communicates, Few Connect* he talks about when people try to communicate with others, they believe the message is all that matters. But the reality is, that communication goes way beyond words. In an important study, UCLA psychology professor emeritus Albert Mehrabian discovered that face-to-face communications can be broken down into three components: 1) words, 2) tone of voice and 3) most importantly, body language.

What may come as a surprise is that in some situations, what people see us do and the tone we use can far outweigh any words we say while trying to communicate. In situations where feelings and attitudes are being communicated:

1. 'WHAT WE SAY' accounts for 7%
2. 'THE WAY WE SAY IT' accounts for 38%
3. 'WHAT OTHERS SEE' accounts for 55%

Amazingly, more than 90 percent of the impression we often convey has nothing to do with what we actually say. Fail to include any one of the three components, and there will be a disconnection from people and a breakdown in communication. All successful groups have leaders who communicate in ways that are effective to each individual of the group. Each individual interprets words, actions and body language differently, so leaders need to be aware of this.

Most leaders have risen to their positions because they have excellent communication skills and have proven that they can lead successful groups. For continued success, leaders and team members will need to have engaging and open conversations about what they visualize for the future.

### Challenge Questions:

1. "What visual technique do I need to improve to better connect with people?"
2. "How can my non-verbal communication help me to connect more easily with others? What would that look like?"
3. How can I be more intentional about connecting with others during your day? What one thing can you do this week to reach out to my people?"

# MICHELLE WEIDENBENNER

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## CHILDREN DO WHAT CHILDREN SEE

When my children were younger, I would take them to McDonald's drive-thru for Happy Meals and cheeseburgers—just so I didn't have to cook. One time, the cashier gave both of my children a boy prize in their Happy Meal. Our son thought that was funny and teased our daughter.

*"Liza is a boy. Liza is a boy!"*

*"Mom! Make him stop!" Liza said.*

The volume in the car got so loud that I turned around and chucked my cheeseburger at our son—just so he would stop.

There he was in the rearview mirror with mustard and ketchup dripping down his face and this look, *I can't believe my mother did that!* What's really sad is that at the time, I probably didn't think twice about it. I was simply trying to get through my day.

Later, when I reflected back on that moment, I was ashamed of what I'd done.

I had many parenting moments like that—where life was so stressful that I reacted in a not-so-perfect way.

Today, my children are adults, and I'd like to think I'm a lot wiser. I know now that I was lacking one essential piece in my parenting.

Other moms and dads are missing it too. They struggle every day to get ahead. They work, they volunteer, they shop, and they parent, but often they're so stressed that they don't make their children their number one priority.

They want their children to grow up to be leaders, to be significant contributors in our world, so they try to give them a leg-up on their peers. They put them in extracurricular activities, keep them plugged in to all the latest technology, and send them to the best schools, but they're still missing one crucial element in their parenting.

*They never learned how to self-lead.*

Parents are the most influential leaders in their children's lives, but often we don't take the time to work on our self-leadership skills. How can we give our children what we don't have?

In my cheeseburger-chucking example, I was teaching my children to throw things when they were stressed. That wasn't the message I wanted to teach them.

Continued on the next page . . .



... Michelle Weidenbenner's article continued from previous page

It wasn't until I read John C. Maxwell's book, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, that I realized what I was missing. In order to be more effective leaders, we need to raise our lid. Maxwell says, "Leadership ability is the lid that determines a person's level of effectiveness. The lower an individual's ability to lead, the lower the lid on his potential."

When I was a young mother I didn't understand this concept, but I knew I was influencing my children every day. They were watching me, and if I wanted to teach them better skills, I had to learn how first.

After I read Dr. Maxwell's book on leadership, I joined their team to become a certified trainer and coach. I wanted to work with parents who were struggling with exasperating moments like I had.

Since I've begun coaching moms and dads who are intentionally focused on building their self-leadership skills, I've seen calmer parents who are more aware of how they have to change. Before they started on their journey they didn't know how to be more effective. Since they've become more focused, they've gained awareness—which has had positive results. Their children are more confident. Their lives are calmer, and they are using strategies that work.

A parent who takes intentional steps to self-lead has a far greater chance for her children to succeed than a parent who leaves it up to chance.

John Maxwell changed my life, but God showed me a way to help others. When I help parents, I believe I'm changing the future of our country. And that brings me the highest reward.



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## EVERYONE COMMUNICATES; FEW CONNECT

When I read the book "Everyone Communicates; Few Connect", it was a jolt of lightning in my thinking. How many of us send memos, emails, texts, facebook messages, tweets but don't really go beyond the surface. My brother and I can chat for 30 minutes on the phone and when I hang up, I can't answer any questions from my wife about my brother's family or what's really going on in his life. But, boy can I tell you his opinion on Michigan football or the Detroit Tigers. As coaches, salespeople, teachers or executives, how often do we talk and make our pitch but don't listen or understand what others want? I guess there is a reason God gave us two ears and one mouth. We are constantly communicating but are we really connecting? Are we really developing a true relationship with others? Ask questions. Be interested in the other person and what they have got to say. Understand their point of view. If we want to truly be people of influence, then we must learn to make connections with others.

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## INFLUENCE

As a John Maxwell Team (JMT) independent certified coach, trainer, and speaker, I've been trained by the best in the world. There is no doubt in my mind!

My professional certification equipped me to deliver first-class leadership coaching and training. I am able to add value to people and organizations in an even greater way than ever before.

My training caused me to reflect on influence. We know:

- Leadership is influence
- Speaking is influence
- Training is influence
- Coaching is influence

Since influence is a critical component of everything I do, I sought to learn more by reading, *Becoming a Person of Influence* by John C. Maxwell.

I learned I was already much more a person of influence than I realized. It was confirmed that the more I could learn about being a person of influence, the stronger leader I will become.

A reflection from John's book on the topic -

A person of influence (an "Influencer") has Integrity with people, Nurtures people, has Faith in people, Listens to people, Understands people, Enlargens people, Navigates for other people, Connects with people, Empowers people, and Reproduces other influencers.

Being a person of influence is all about people. The people skills God has given me (though I had felt they were unappreciated in my corporate work world) are key to success!

*"Growth is the great separator between those who succeed and those who do not. When I see a person beginning to separate themselves from the pack, it's almost always due to personal growth." (John C. Maxwell)*

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## JOHN MAXWELL . . . WHO?

Little did I know of John Maxwell, eventhough I quoted him in my book, *iPOSSIBLE*®, “Every person has a longing to be significant; to make a contribution; to be a part of something noble and purposeful.”

Not until I met John Maxwell live!

As John ended on stage, you could see the exhilaration in his face, the emotion in his voice and some tears in his eyes. This was his passion. It was impactful -- etched clearly in my mind and heart. He has not lost it after so many years!

It was only after stepping out as Executive Vice President of the Singapore Exchange to pursue my passion that I researched John. It dawned on me that what he has fitted right in! My renewed purpose is to inspire, influence and impact lives and organizations to help change destinies -- as I live out the unlimited possibilities given by God with passion, love, guts and adventure!

My encounter with “John Maxwell live” has been a major and unforgettable lesson. I have seen firsthand a man who exemplifies:

- Leadership with a big heart
- Immense humility
- Incredible ability to connect from stage
- Transformational vision

You too have huge possibilities, regardless circumstances. Be inspired to grow your strengths, team-up with like-minded people, and break-out to use your gifts to fulfill your higher purpose.

I’m grateful and honored now to be part of John’s team as I seek to add value to people and organizations in Singapore and the Asia-Pacific.

*“To add value to others, one must first value others.” (John C. Maxwell)*

# PAUL EVANS

After 20+ years in education and athletics, Paul Evans founded *Triskelion Sports Services LLC* to further his passion for youth sports as a means of personal development and social change. As a husband, father of three, entrepreneur, youth sports coach, and volunteer, Paul continually seeks new ways to nurture growth within himself, his family, and the world.

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## GROWTH

The most ironic thing about working with kids is that they think about themselves so much but understand so little about themselves. They live so much in the moment, which often provides the spark for their incredible imagination and creativity. Watching their minds work is a wonder to behold! And yet, we adults grow so frustrated at their 'inability' to grasp certain notions or concepts. Every parent in the world has uttered the phrase "If I've told you once, I've told you a million times..." more often than they can count. We shake our heads in disbelief and wonder why they make the same mistakes over and over...

Then reality slaps us right in the face. We might be 'grown-ups' in many ways, but how many of us do that very same thing? Albert Einstein said that "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." By definition then, we are all nuts!

The root of this conundrum is Awareness. In John Maxwell's book *The 15 Invaluable Laws of Growth*, he opens chapter two with the following quote from James Russell Lowell:

*"No one can produce great things who is not thoroughly sincere in dealing with himself."*

The first step in designing the life you want is to learn what that actually is. As Maxwell says, "You must KNOW yourself to GROW yourself." Take the time to get to really know yourself. Practice the art of self-reflection. Develop the ability to evaluate your experiences. Over time, your relationship with yourself will deepen and you will begin to understand what is genuinely important to you. This is the wellspring of both your passion and your action. And once you master this law of growth, make time to share it with others

*"As you begin changing your thinking, start immediately to change your behavior. Begin to act the part of the person you would like to become. Take action on your behavior. Too many people want to feel, then take action. This never works." (John C. Maxwell)*

# AMY BARG

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## HEAVE-HO TO STATUS QUO

Redbirds. The Green Team. Building Bridges. Reading group names. Do you remember yours from elementary school? Those veiled attempts to camouflage the fact that some kids were less accomplished than others in reading were largely unsuccessful. Kids are perceptive. The teacher term for readers displaying the newest of newbie decoding skills was . . . emergent.

Unfortunately, (and incorrectly) in my mind that term had a modicum of negativity associated with it. But on a recent *Minute with Maxwell*, John created a powerful and much needed paradigm shift in me regarding emerging. Here's what he said:

*"When we're emerging it says that we are in an act of growing and developing. We're not where we were AND . . . we're not where we're going to be."*

In a weird sort of way embracing that point of view takes the pressure off and . . . it puts the pressure on.

Pressure off . . . we've done something that has produced some level of growth. We've moved forward in some manner. We can pat ourselves on the back for those growth gains in life. It's kind of nice to relax and revel in a competency acquired. Sigh of relief for having moved forward, right?

Pressure on . . . this is where the warning siren sounds. If we fall into the false sense of having "arrived" and accept the current state of our...job, relationship, standard of living, level of giving, leadership ability (fill in your own blank) as being the *best* it will ever be . . . we're making a beeline for the mainstream mode of mediocrity. And that my friend, is where most of the world makes its bed.

You want more? Here's how.

Latch on to the Law of Curiosity that says: *growth is stimulated by asking . . . "Why?"*

You need to become insatiably curious, interested in life, people, events, and experiences. No longer be satisfied with simply swatting the flies that make their way into your life's picnic. Instead, analyze every "status quo" situation you're currently accepting and ask yourself "why" questions.

Continued on the next page . . .

... Amy Barg's insights continued from previous page

Maxwell wisely suggests . . . *"Ask why. Explore. Evaluate what you discover. Repeat. That's a pretty good formula for growth. Never forget, anyone who knows all the answers is not asking the right questions."*

A few of my personal favorite "whys" include:

- *Why do I think that?*
- *Why did I react that way?*
- *Why do I believe that about myself?*
- *Why am I allowing someone to treat me like that?*

Note: there's one "why" to steer clear of the way you would a skunk with stink. -- *Why me?*

That one's a fast track to the woefully wasteful victim mindset. Swiftly kick it to the curb and don't invite it in . . . to your mind or your heart. Its wasted energy . . . take it from one who knows.

So what "why" questions do you need to ask as you reflect on your own area of "redbird reader" emergence??? Be encouraged . . . there's beauty at every stage in the process.

Here's to remaining steadfast in striking down stifling status quo beliefs and . . . by all means, stay consistently curious!

## JEFF RAVER

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## BEING A CERTIFIED COACH

It has now been a year since I became a Certified John Maxwell Coach, Speaker and Trainer. A lot has changed in the past 6 months. My wife and I have moved to Florida, where we have always dreamed of living and my Consulting Business is rapidly growing.

As the saying goes, "It hasn't been easy, but it has been worth it."

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### . . . Jeff Raver's post continued from the previous page

When I left the corporate world after 24 years to pursue my dream of helping others as a Sales Consultant, little did I know that my business would be so much more than just Sales Training and Consulting. Today my days consist of not only Sales Training Seminars but also Leadership Training Seminars and both Executive Coaching as well as Personal Coaching. I have many clients that I not only train but also Coach and Mentor. My clients include, Presidents, Executive Vice Presidents and Owners of successful companies as well as Sales Managers. Sales People and Corporate Leaders and Managers. I am working with several companies as a "Sales Manager Consultant" providing guidance to the Sales Team during their search for a new Sales Manager. I have developed a unique Sales Simulator Formula Training that is personalized for each client and involves developing a complete Sales Process from beginning to end.

My Training as a John Maxwell Coach has changed the way I train. The Coaching Training I have received from Christian Simpson and the speaking training I have received from Roddy Galbraith in the JMT Program has helped me develop my speaking, coaching and consulting skills to a level I never imagined. Instead of the old style of the lecture type training, I now use my Coaching Skills of asking many questions to get the participants involved in the learning process by sharing their experiences and getting them to think through the processes. The Leadership training from Paul Martinelli and Scott Fay has led me to become a Speaker and Trainer on Leadership as well as a Sales Trainer. The business building skills I have learned from Melissa West has helped in growing my business and the Sales Training of Ed DeCosta has added new ways of thinking about my Sales Training. The John Maxwell Certification Training never ends. The curriculum continues to grow and the multiple weekly Certification Calls continue to challenge me as a Certified Team Member.

The learning and growing doesn't end once you become a Certified John Maxwell Team Member. When I originally invested in the program I thought I would become Certified and that would be the end of the program but it is so much more. The International group of John Maxwell Certified Coaches has become family and I speak to many on a regular basis on the phone or through texts. We are connected by the common mission to add value to others through what we do.

John Maxwell has built a team of coaches, speakers and trainers who carry on his mission of developing Leaders around the world. John says, "Leadership is influence, nothing more and nothing less." Being a John Maxwell Certified Coach has influenced me far beyond what I ever imagined.

I regularly speak to others who are considering becoming a John Maxwell Certified Team Member and I tell each of them the same thing. "Becoming a John Maxwell Certified Team Member will not guarantee overnight success as a Speaker, Coach and Trainer but it will equip you with the skill set to become a Professional Speaker, Coach and Trainer. It is then up to each of them to build a business around that foundation." I am thankful I decided to invest in the John Maxwell Program as I continue to grow both personally and professionally through the training and mentoring of John Maxwell and the JMT Faculty.

*"Leadership is not about titles, positions or flowcharts. It is about one life influencing another." (John C. Maxwell)*



The leadership insights provided are intended to add value to others. We encourage you to visit the John Maxwell Team Member websites who contributed to this eBook. Reach out to them and inquire about their services. If you are interested in finding out more about joining the John Maxwell Team, visit [www.JohnMaxwellTeamInfo.com](http://www.JohnMaxwellTeamInfo.com) This free eBook was published by Jamy Bechler.

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