

Overview of Leadership for Teenagers

(appropriate for Mid-Schoolers and older)

Michael R. Daily 8/30/05 (30 minutes)

(Reference: The Extraordinary Leader, John H. Zenger & Joseph Folkman, ISBN 0-07-138747-1)

What is a leader?

I'm not talking about a person in a position of authority necessarily but someone who is a leader regardless of their position.

The Bible describes leadership not as a position but as being a living example that others want to imitate. This is the definition of Leadership that we are using in this study.

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace. 2We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers; 3constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father, 4knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you; 5for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. 6You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, 7so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. 8For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything. 9For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, 10and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

Hebrews 13:7

Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.

A leader is someone that others choose to imitate or to be influenced by.

To Lead: To guide on a way especially by going in advance

Why are people so interested in leadership?

Because studies have shown that people who are leaders have, on average, **15 times more productive impact** than someone who is diligent and hardworking, but not a leader.

Don't you want to have 15 times more impact than you otherwise could have?

Don't you want people to listen to what you have to say?

American business and the US military have spent many millions of dollars on research on understanding leadership. The kind of people that did this research was Harvard Business School, UC Berkeley School of Management, and the US Marine Corp.

The first question they looked at is: are leaders born or can they be made? The research showed that leaders, in fact, can be made. In other words, you can train and develop someone into a leader.

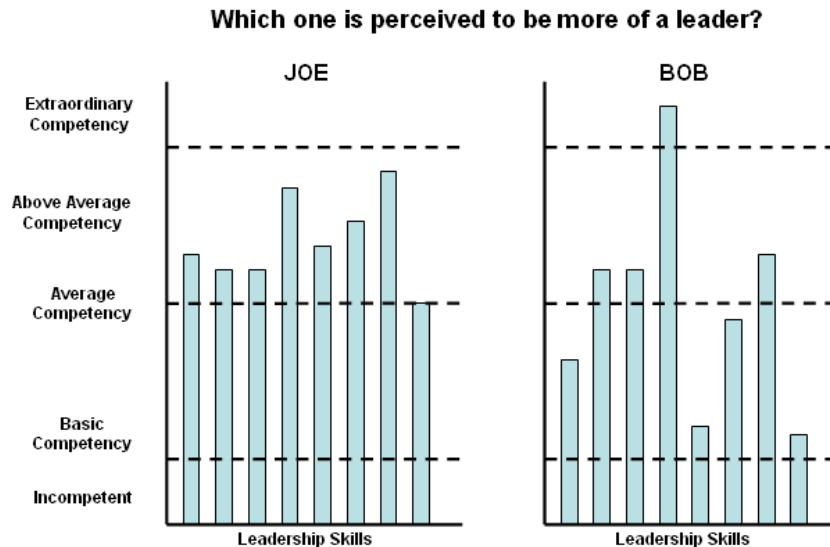
Of course we knew this from the Word of God before the research was done.

II Timothy 2:2

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Faithful men can be taught to be leaders.

Second, if it is possible to make leaders, how exactly do you go about doing it? The results shocked the researchers because it was not what they expected. (Hold up chart)



Research has shown that there are about 16 leadership skills. On these charts each bar represents how competent that person is at that skill. I'm not showing all 16 bars, just enough for you to get the idea. If the bar stops in the bottom section it means that the person is incompetent at that skill. If the bar stops in the section between basic and average competency the person is below average at that skill. If the bar stops between average and extraordinary competency the person is above average at that skill. Finally, if the bar stops above the extraordinary competency line the person is extraordinarily competent at that skill.

Which person, Joe or Bob, do you think will be perceived to be a leader by most people? (take a vote).

The research shows that 2/3 of people WILL NOT view Joe as a leader but 2/3 of people WILL view Bob as a leader.

The reason is the way people are wired. People view skills between basic competency and extraordinary competency as basically being the same. So anything that falls anywhere in this band is thought of by most people as the same - as being average.

Therefore, most people will view Joe as an average person and not a leader.

On the other hand if a person is extraordinarily competent at one thing people, because of the way they are wired, assume the person is competent in other areas of life until proven otherwise. They give you the benefit of the doubt, and they listen to what you have to say about things other than what you are extraordinarily competent at – this is called the halo effect.

I Samuel 16:7

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

People key off of certain things. Its just the way they are.

Let me give you some examples of how American business uses the halo effect

You're watching TV and a commercial comes on and the commercial shows a famous basketball player in slow motion doing his slam dunks and draining his 3 point shots – then he stops, looks in the camera, and he holds it up, what is it? The shoe, or the underwear, or whatever it is. Now, do you really believe that that basketball player is the most technically knowledgeable person to talk about that shoe? Of course not. So why is he on TV instead of someone else?

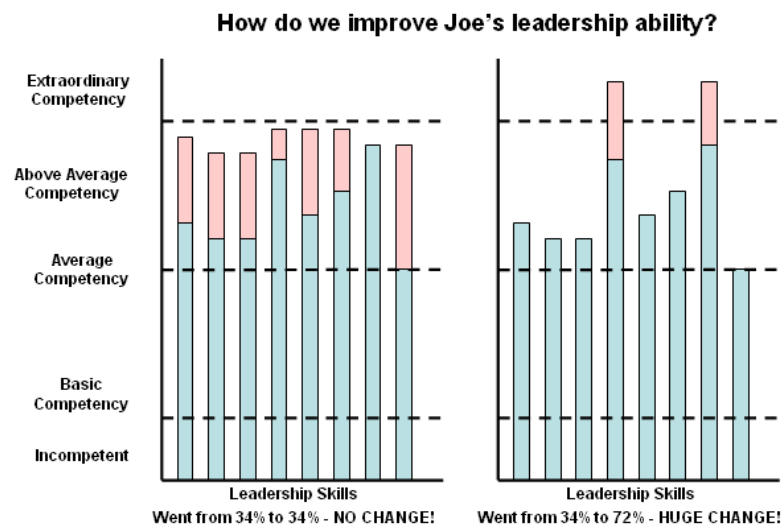
The reason is, he is extraordinarily competent at putting a ball through an apparatus and because of that extraordinary competency there is a segment of the population that wants to hear whatever he has to say. They will listen closely to what he says about the shoe and will consider it and a certain percentage of them will then go out and buy the shoe. It works – that's why American business keeps doing it.

Another example: A famous actor is giving testimony to congress about environmental issues. Now, do you really believe that actor is the most scientifically knowledgeable person about environmental issues? Of course not – that's ridiculous. So why are they talking to congress? Why not you or me? Because this person is extraordinarily competent at playacting, congressmen and senators are very interested to hear whatever they have to say – it's the halo effect.

What are some other examples of people who are extraordinarily competent?

Homemaking - Martha Stewart, Riding a Bike - Lance Armstrong. It doesn't matter what the competency is in – it might be sports, or music, or math – I don't know what it is – it could be chess. Did you know that if you are a grand master in chess there are millions of people in the world that would love to hear whatever you have to say? It doesn't matter what it is – if you have an extraordinary competency in something, a certain segment of the population will be interested to hear whatever you have to say. They may or may not agree with what you say but they will listen and consider it.

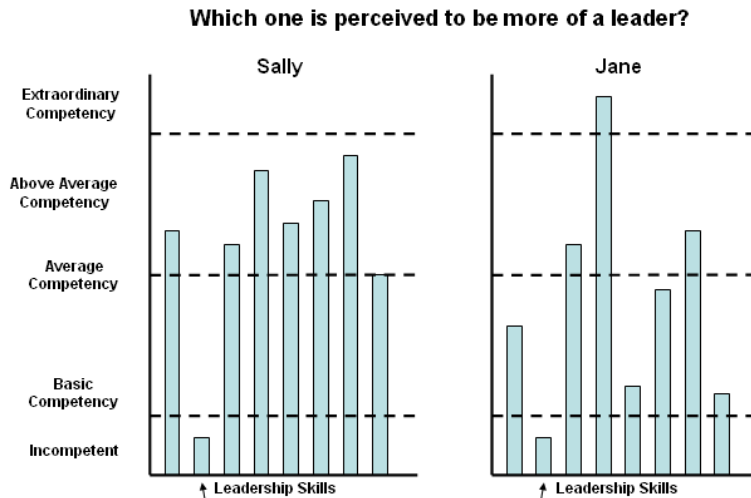
Now that we know this, let's talk about the best way to improve Joe's leadership effectiveness. (hold up chart)



If Joe tries to improve his leadership by what is shown on the left what's going to happen is Joe is going to put in a lot of effort on a lot of things and will, in fact, improve significantly. However, there will be no change in people's perception of him as a leader. Joe will then say to himself that he has worked very hard to improve and yet people still don't listen to him – he must be a real loser to work that hard and see no improvement. Joe will then give up and decide to live life as someone who can never be a leader, its too hard and he's too much of a loser.

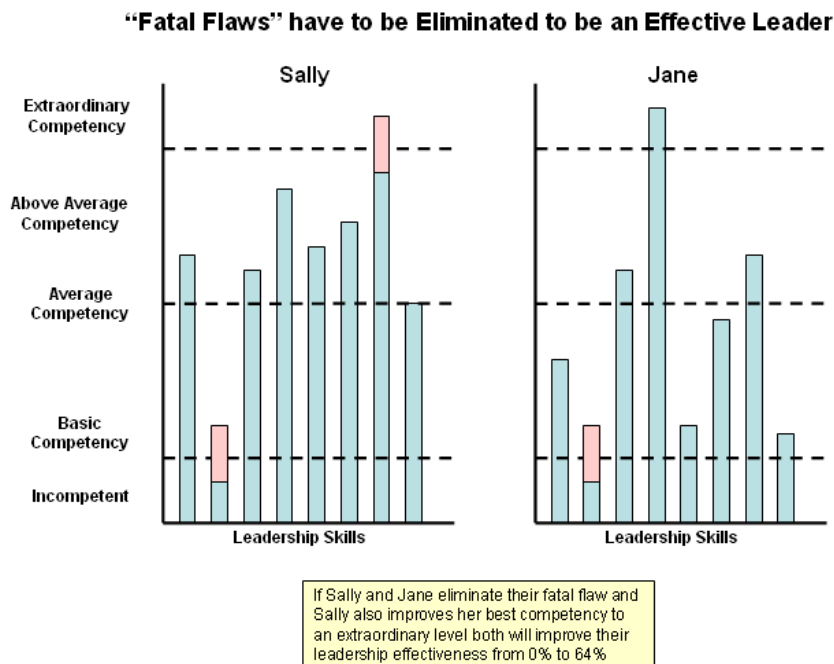
Instead, Joe needs to identify the one or two things he really is good at and pour his energy into getting even better in those things and push them to an extraordinary level. If he does that it will take less work, be more fun, and will result in 72% of people viewing Joe as a leader!

Now, let's look at two more people, Sally and Jane. (hold up chart)



Which one is perceived to be the leader? (take a vote)

This is obviously a trick question because neither one will be viewed as a leader. The reason is they both are incompetent at one of the leadership skills. If you are incompetent at one of the leadership skills you will not be viewed as a leader – these are called “fatal flaws”. Fatal flaws have a negative halo effect that is more powerful than anything else. So, if you want to be a leader the first thing you have to do is get rid of any fatal flaws you have. Then focus on improving your one or two best strengths to an extraordinary level. (hold up chart)



Notice that fatal flaws do not have to be improved to a high level of competency. Just to a level of basic competency.

Now, let's talk about what the most common fatal flaws are. The interesting thing about these fatal flaws is that they are not technical in nature. In other words, you can work on them right now as a teenager.

The most common fatal flaws in adults

The biggest fatal flaw has been found to be a lack of character. Contrary to what you might see in the movies personal character plays the biggest role in whether or not other people perceive you to be a leader.

2 Corinthians 8:21-23

for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

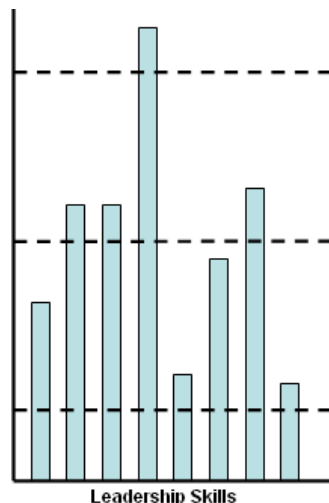
The other most common fatal flaws are:

1. **Inability to learn from mistakes** – hid mistakes, did not alert others quickly, did not take quick action to fix, and did not move on but brooded about it. Everyone makes mistakes. When I make a mistake at work I am usually in my boss's office that same day giving him a "heads up" on what I did so that he is not caught off guard when he finds out from someone else. People who do not handle their mistakes appropriately are not viewed as leaders.
2. **Lack of core interpersonal skills** – being abrasive, arrogant, or mean. Also, if you do not do the following people will not view you as a leader even if you have an extraordinary competency:
 - Look people in the eye when you talk to them.**
 - Learn and use people's names**
 - Say & do things that communicate you are listening/understanding** (nod your head)
 - Do not dominate the conversation – get them to talk**
 - Inquire about other's ideas and activities**
 - Laugh at their jokes** (one of my customers did not want to work with one of my staff. When I asked why he thought for a moment and said, "He doesn't laugh in the right places")
 - Praise others hard work and effort when they deserve it.**
 - Smile when meeting and greeting other people.** (This is one I had to learn. You don't smile because you feel like smiling, you smile to make the other person feel comfortable so you do it even when you don't feel like it)
3. **Lack of openness to new or different ideas** (reacting negatively when someone has a new idea)
4. **Lack of accountability/attitude of responsibility** (its not my fault, blaming other people, making excuses for failures)
5. **Lack of Initiative** (Its not my job)

Notice that all of these are things you can work on right now as a teenager.

Key Point: Get rid of your fatal flaws now so that you can focus on your competencies later.

Now let's talk about how you can use this right now! (hold up chart)



This chart is you!

Starting in mid-school and up through high school Satan is going to hammer you with a message every day.

He's going to point to each of your skills and tell you that you are not very good at this and you are only average at that and, yes, you are good at that one thing but that thing is kind of silly and not very important.

He's going to say, "It seems to me that there are an awful lot of people who are better than you at an awful lot of things. You know kid, I'm not sure you have what it takes to make it in the adult world. It's a complicated place and I'm not sure you can cut it. Leader! I'm not sure you'll even survive!"

Its important to understand that these are all lies. Things don't work that way.

What you should say instead is: "I'm OK at this and above average at that, and not so good at this, but look at this thing God has given me that I am good at. That's my ticket." And that is what you should develop and bring to an extraordinary level.

God has given you natural talents and gifts. If you are a Christian He has given you at least one supernatural gift. These are the things that you can develop to an extraordinary level.

So, how do you figure out what you are good at? Try lots of things and see how you do. Someone may come up to you after something and say, "Hey, you're pretty good at that!" If 4 people come up to you and say that, guess what? You're probably pretty good at it.

Then find out who the top people in America are at the thing you are good at. Read their book, take their class, go to their workshop, call them on the phone and ask questions – dive in, engage, and push it to an extraordinary level and people will begin to view you as a leader.

They will listen to what you have to say and will consider it – they may not always agree or believe you but they will listen carefully to what you have to say and will consider it.

Additional Verses Related To Leadership

Luke 22:24-26

24And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest. 25And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors.' 26"But it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant.

Philippians 3:13-21

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; 16however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained. 17Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. 18For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. 20For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

II Thessalonians 3:6-9

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us. 7For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, 8nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you; 9not because we do not have the right to this, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you would follow our example.

Titus 2:1-8

But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. 2Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. 3Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, 4so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored. 6Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; 7in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, 8sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

I Corinthians 4:14-16

I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. 15For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 16Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me.

Hebrews 6:9-12

But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way. 10For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints 11And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, 12so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: *Overview of Leadership for Teenagers*

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *I Thessalonians 1:1-10*

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me? Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Hebrews 13:7, I Corinthians 4:14-16, Hebrews 6:9-12*

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PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *II Timothy 2:2*

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PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *Philippians 3:13-21*

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PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: *II Thessalonians 3:6-9*

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