



The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership

Book summary by Frumi Rachel Barr, MBA, PhD

Author: John C. Maxwell

Publisher: Thomas Nelson Publishers

Copyright year: 2000

ISBN:

Author bio and credits: John Maxwell is an expert on leadership. He has written more than 20 books and speaks to more than 250,000 people every year.

Author's Big Thought: These are the basic laws of leadership that transcend time, place, culture, and situation. These laws can be applied to business or private life - follow them and people will follow you. It has taken the author a lifetime of experience to learn and apply these 21 laws of leadership. Leadership is leadership no matter where you go or what you do – time and technology changes but the true principles of leadership are constant. They can be learned or acquired. There are four key thoughts 1. The laws can be learned 2. The laws can stand-alone, 3. The laws carry consequences, 4. These laws are the foundation of leadership – once you learn them you have to practice them and apply them.

Notes:

Law # 1 The Law of the Lid

Leadership ability is the lid that determines the leaders level of effectiveness. The higher the leadership the greater effectiveness. Your leadership ability always determines the effectiveness and the potential of your organization. Personal success without leadership ability limits effectiveness. Wherever you look there are people who can go only so far because of the limitation of their leadership. E.g. Apple and Wosniak/Jobst.

Leaders are often fired when new management comes in – if he'd been a good leader, the organization wouldn't be in the trouble it's in.

Law # 2 The law of influence

The true measure of leadership is influence. How is it measured? Example given was Princess Di and Mother Theresa were voted the two women who were the most caring. Di needed the title only until she had the influence. Leadership is influence. Titles don't have much value when it comes to leading – it can't be appointed or assigned.

Five common misunderstandings

1. Management myth – leadership is influencing people to follow, management is about processes
2. Entrepreneur myth – people assume that they are leaders- often they are able to hold people for a moment but not long term
3. Knowledge myth - IQ doesn't equate to leadership
4. Pioneer myth – being first isn't always the same as leading
5. Position myth – it's not the position who makes the leader it's the leader who makes the position

Position based leadership doesn't work in a voluntary setting. In voluntary organizations the only thing that works is leadership in its purest form – in influence. Followers in voluntary organizations cannot be forced to get aboard. If you're a businessperson and you want to find out if your employees are capable of leading, send them out into the voluntary community.

"He who he thinks he leads but has no followers is merely taking a walk".

Law # 3. The law of process.

Leadership develops daily, not in a day. The ability to lead is a collection of skills that doesn't happen overnight. Successful leaders are learners.

Phase 1 – I don't know what I don't know

Phase 2 – I know what I don't know. When no one is following – we know we need leadership skills

Phase 3 – I grow and know and it starts to show.

Phase 4 - I simply go because of what I know. Ability to lead becomes more automatic.

Everyone has the potential but it can't be accomplished overnight – it takes a lifetime.

Law # 4. The law of navigation.

Anyone can steer the ship but it takes a leader to chart the course. Followers need leaders who can effectively navigate for them, Some times though the consequences aren't as serious as in the military, for example, they need leaders to chart the course.

Maxwell's success strategy – acronym PLAN AHEAD

P – Predetermine a course of action

L - Lay out your goals

A- Adjust your priorities

N – Notify key personnel

A - Allow time for acceptance

H – Head into action

E – Expect problems

A - Always point to the successes

D - Daily review your plan.

The secret to the law of navigation is preparation. It isn't the size of the project but the size of the leader. A good navigator can take people anywhere.

Law # 5 When the real leader speaks, everyone listens. (The law of EF Hutton)

You'll never have trouble figuring out the leader in the group. Who do people watch in a meeting? The real leader. Positional leaders speak first, but the real leader speaks later – only need their influence to

get things done. If you see a disparity between who is leading the meeting and who is leading the people you know who the real leader is. The proof of leadership is found in the followers. The real test of leadership isn't where you start out, but where you end up.

Law # 6 The law of solid ground.

Followers won't trust someone who allows slips in character. Trust is the foundation of leadership. People will tolerate honest mistakes, but if you violate their trust, you can't regain it. Trust and leadership credibility always goes hand in hand. Character creates trust and trust makes leadership possible. Character communicates many things to followers:

1. Consistency
2. Potential
3. Respect –the result of making sound decisions, and putting what's good for the organization ahead of their own agenda.

The repercussions of breaking trust are seen often in politics.

Law # 7 The law of respect.

People naturally follow leaders stronger than themselves. Harriet Tubman (underground railroad) – everyone who came into contact with her felt her strong leadership and they trusted and respected her.

The greatest test of respect is when leaders make major organizational changes. The fact that you spend a lot of time and energy as a leader would not be enough – you have to be a strong enough leader.

Law # 8. The law of intuition.

This is the most difficult to understand – it depends on facts plus instinct and other intangibles. This is often the quality that differentiates good leaders from great ones. Leaders see everything with a leadership bias so they know what to do. Some people are born with great leadership intuition, and others have to hone it. Informed intuition causes issues to jump out.

Leadership is more art than science. The application changes with every leader in every situation that is why intuition is important.

Law # 9 The law of magnetism - who you are, is who you attract.

Effective leaders are always on the lookout for good people. What qualities do great employees possess? What qualities do you want to see on the people on your team? In most situations you draw people to you who have the same qualities that you do.

Here are areas where you probably are similar:

- Attitude
- Generation
- Background
- Values
- Life experience

- Leadership ability

The better leader you are the better leaders you will attract.

Law # 10 The law of connection - leaders touch your heart before they ask for a hand.

Knowing how to connect with people is key. One of the reasons Kennedy succeeded was the ability to make the connection with his constituents. All great communicators know that you have to move people with emotion before action. You develop credibility with people when you connect with them. Some people feel that connection is the responsibility of the followers, but successful leaders are always initiators. Employees display an incredible loyalty when leaders connect. Don't ever underestimate the importance of bridging the connection with people.

Law # 11 the law of the inner circle - a leader's potential is determined by the people closest to him. If those people are strong then the leader can make a huge impact, if not, then he can't. Continually develop the inner circle in order to delegate as much as possible to them. "Success comes not from what you know but whom you know and how you present yourself to those people" (Lee Iococca)

Law # 12 the law of empowerment – only secure leaders give power to others.

Henry Ford did not embrace this law. For almost 20 years the company only offered the one design. In 1923 he grudgingly allowed another model to be introduced. Their market share kept shrinking. He was the antithesis of the empowering leader.

Only secure leaders are able to give power to others. The greatest things happen only when you give others the credit. Empowerment is powerful for both the receiver and the mentor.

Law # 13 the law of reproduction – it takes a leader to raise up a leader.

10% become leaders because of natural gifting, 5% because of a crisis but 85% because of the influence of another leader.

It takes someone who has done it themselves to raise other leaders. If a company has strong leaders and they keep reproducing themselves, leadership will get stronger and stronger. E.g. GE as a result of Jack Welch. Former GE leaders have become CEOs of many other companies. How did they do that? Leadership training is one of the company's highest values. When it comes to producing leaders it takes one to know one and grow one.

Law # 14 the law of buy-in – people buy in to the leader and then the vision.

Many people believe that if the cause is good enough, people will follow. People buy in to the leader first and then their vision. Has the leader given his people reason to follow – does he have the credibility with his people?

Every message that people receive is filtered through the deliverer of the message. This concept is often used in the selection of spokespeople.

When followers don't like the leader or the vision, they look for another leader. When followers don't like the leader but they do like the vision they still look for another leader. When followers do like the leader and they don't like the vision they look for another vision. When followers like the leader and the vision, they get behind both.

Success is measured by taking people to where they need to go – but you can only do that when they buy in to the vision.

Law #15 The law of victory – leaders find a way for the team to win

What separates a winner from a loser? Victorious leaders share one quality, the total inability to accept defeat – they go after success with everything they’ve got. Crisis seems to bring out the best and worst in leaders. Leaders do not give up. When the pressure is greatest great leaders are at their best. Good leaders find a way for their teams to win.

Success depends on:

1. Unity of vision
2. Diversity of skills
3. A leader dedicated to victory and raising players to their potential

Leaders provide motivation, empowerment and direction.

Law # 16 The law of the big “mo” – momentum is a leaders best friend.

To change direction first you have to create forward progress. A leader is someone who can motivate others. Sometimes it is the only difference between winning and losing. When you have momentum on your side it makes leaders look better than they are, it helps followers look better than are. It creates an environment that allows change to happen.

Law # 17 The law of priorities – leaders understand that activity is not necessarily accomplishment.

A leader is the one who climbs the highest tree, surveys the whole area and shouts – we’re in the wrong jungle (Stephen Covey).

All successful people live according to their priorities. E.g. Jack Welsh – he began the hardware revolution changing the entire profile of the company. The question he asked was - Can the business unit be number 1 or number 2 in the marketplace? Success comes from focusing your people on what really matters and brings the highest reward.

Law # 18 The law of sacrifice – a leader must give up, to go up. CEOs may have to give up pay or lose their rights. E.g. Lee Iacocca. To be a great leader you have to make sacrifices. The ultimate sacrifice was that by Martin Luther King. The higher the level of leadership, the more you will have to sacrifice.

Law # 19 The law of timing - When to lead is as important as where to lead and how.

If the leader performs the wrong action at the wrong time, it brings disaster. The right action at the wrong time brings resistance. The right action at the right time brings success.

Law # 20 The law of explosive growth. To add growth, lead followers, to multiply growth, lead leaders.

Becoming a leader who develop leaders takes a different focus.

Leaders who develop followers:

Need to be needed
 Focus on weaknesses
 Treat Their People The Same
 Spend time with other
 Impact only the people they touch
 Add growth

Leaders who develop leaders:

Want to be succeeded
 Focus On Strengths
 Treat Their People Different
 Invest time in others
 Impact far beyond their own reach
 Multiply growth

Law # 21 The law of legacy – a leaders lasting value is measured by succession. A leader must prepare for his not being there. Make the company as high as he could. Prepare a successor. E.g. Goyzetta & Coca Cola

This is the law that the fewest leaders exercise. A great leader prepares the organization to succeed after he leaves. A leader must prepare his people and his organization for what lies ahead. Lasting value is measured by succession.

Reviewer's recommendation: The book is full of historical stories to illustrate the laws of leadership.

Get 100 business book summaries just like this one at 100mustreads.com



Contact Frumi at 949-729-1577

ceoconfidante@frumi.com

www.frumi.com

www.100mustreads.com

About the reviewer: Frumi Rachel Barr, MBA, PhD

Many CEO's find themselves asking "What now?" to sensitive situations that only an experienced former CEO can understand. Frumi is brought in to solve problems and often remains to work with you, as your confidante and secret weapon. She has an uncanny knack of getting to the heart of your corporate climate and maximizing your team's performance, profitability and sustainability.

To schedule a free ***Break From the Pack to Success*** consultation email

ceocondfidante@frumi.com or call 949-729-1577