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Objectives

After completing this unit, you will be able to lead yourself and lead others.

Introduction

Leadership is not about authority, titles, or position. True leadership is about influence, initiative, and character. Even without formal authority, you can lead effectively by cultivating self-leadership, building trust, and shaping the culture around you.

Reject the Myth of Authority

Leadership does not begin when you get the title; it begins with how you act now.

We live in an authority-based culture, where certain positions possess an inherent authority and responsibility, but we all know that positional authority alone does not equate to effective leadership.

If a leader does not inspire confidence, he or she will be unable to effect change without resorting to brute force.

Influence has always been, and will always be, the currency of leadership.

~ Clay Scroggins

Myth / erroneous belief	Reality / how things are
If only I had more authority I could fix the problems.	

Lead Yourself First

Emotional intelligence and self-awareness are the foundations of leadership. Pay attention to your own motives, insecurities, and blind spots. Self-discipline and humility create credibility.

Myth / erroneous belief	Reality / how things are
I need to be more outgoing when I'm really an introvert.	
I need to be funnier to fit in.	
I need to be the boss when the boss walks out.	
I need to project the image that I have it all together.	

*You can begin to lead, right where you are today.
Take responsibility to make great **WHAT** you can make great.
~ Clay Scroggins*

Core beliefs you have of yourself come from your:

- **Past** – family: race/class/citizenship/lineage.
- **People** – who is in my corner? Who IS the loudest and who SHOULD be the loudest?
- **Personality** – hardwired self-temperament. Ambition? Highly relational?
- **Purpose** – what do I uniquely bring and how to capitalize on it? What does success look like in my life?
- **Priorities** – truths that shape my identity like my values, passions, religion, faith, self-determination, and how they all influence my decisions. What is most important about me?

*Everyone is in charge of something, even if it is just you...
You are the boss of you! ~ Clay Scroggins*

You are in charge of your emotions, thoughts, reactions, and decisions (the law of personal responsibility). No one can lead you further than you'll lead yourself.

Song: Man in the Mirror –Siedah Garrett (lyrics), sung by Michael Jackson

Chorus:

I'm starting with the man in the mirror
I'm asking him to change his ways
And no message could have been any clearer
If you wanna make the world a better place

Take a look at yourself and then _____

Bridge/Tag:

You gotta get it right while you got the time
'Cause when you close your heart

Then you close your _____

Create discipline in the little things.

Be on time. When you say you'll reach out, do it. Read for your betterment. Say no to the doughnut and say yes to the workout. Don't buy something from the impulse buy aisle. Do this when nobody else is looking. Monitor your heart (motives and feelings) and behavior (acting or not acting). And watch out for the dark corners that hold jealousy, anger, and frustration.

Stephen Covey wrote *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*

- 1) Be Proactive,
- 2) Begin with the End in Mind,
- 3) Put First Things First,
- 4) Think Win-Win,
- 5) Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood,
- 6) Synergize, and

7) Sharpen the Saw – which is: regularly renewing yourself in four areas—physical, spiritual, mental, and social/emotional—to maintain a balanced and effective life.

It's about _____

by investing in self-renewal

to _____

for long term effectiveness.

Change your Paradigm

We see the world, not as it is, but as we are – or, as we are conditioned to see it. When we open our mouths to describe what we see, we in effect describe ourselves. A paradigm shift is a fundamental change in one's mental map or perspective of how they see the world and how they interpret reality. These are not just about changing an attitude or behavior, but a deeper change in the underlying assumptions and worldview that shape our actions and are often influenced by our experiences and conditioning.

We can only achieve quantum improvements in our lives as we quit hacking at the leaves of attitude and behavior and get to work on the root, the paradigms from which our attitudes and behaviors flow.
~ Stephen Covey

Covey describes paradigms as the mental models or "lenses" we use to perceive and understand everything around us, based on our assumptions, experiences, and values.

VIDEO Covey Lense <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwt9tEcDRgA>

- **The power of conditioning:** Our perceptions are not innate; they are shaped and conditioned by our upbringing, family, culture, and life experiences. This conditioning can cause us to respond to situations emotionally or instinctively, rather than thoughtfully.
- **The danger of assuming objectivity:** We often mistakenly believe that our viewpoint is objective and that others who see things differently are wrong. Covey emphasizes that it is humbling to realize that our perspective is limited by our own conditioning.
- **The need for a paradigm shift:** To truly solve problems and grow, Covey argues that we need to be willing to change our own perceptions—to have a "paradigm shift." Simply changing our behavior or attitude is not enough if the underlying assumptions are flawed. The story of a subway encounter is a classic example Covey uses to illustrate this point.
- **Inside-out change:** This insight is a foundation for Covey's "inside-out" philosophy, which states that effective change must begin with ourselves. To change our behaviors and circumstances, we must first change how we see things and address our own paradigms.

Positivity and Critical Thinking

Positivity is the greatest benefit you bring to the team, but BEING a critical thinker, (that can be developed) is a substantial value add. Question assumptions, notice or recognize abnormalities, and connect the dots between feelings and actions. These skills will help you solve problems.

VIDEO Scroggins Positivity

Attitude is a daily choice. Positivity coupled with Critical Thinking (realism & honesty) is the ultimate combination.

- Positivity alone can lead to overpromise and under deliver – rainbows and unicorns, planted in denial, nauseating, overly positive and blindly following.
- Critical thinking (not bitter or cynical) and thoughtful. Make something better.

If you're taking two sets of notes – you're a critical thinking.:

- One set on **what I'm saying and what you're learning**, and
- One on **how you'd do it better, how you'd say it better**

That is _____

That's what leaders do. You're learning and you are questioning things. You're asking:

- Why is this working?
- What is the win here?

*You realize everything is not always awesome,
and critical thinkers are able to see though things,
listen, watch, and connect the dots,
because they can think critically. ~ Clay Scroggins*

Develop Critical Thinking

There are a few subtle shifts you can immediately make:

1. Stop _____, Start thinking as an owner.

2. Stop _____.

Don't have back-to-back meetings. Start scheduling critical thinking meetings (outside of the shower like 72% of us).

- a. Create a clear mental space by engaging your preferred learning style - whether that's repetitive movement (walking, mowing, cleaning) for kinesthetic, talking ideas out loud for auditory, or mind-mapping for visual.
- b. The **time efficiency** of back-to-back meetings doesn't lead to **effectiveness**. The science behind spacing out meetings is grounded in cognitive psychology and neuroscience, showing that breaks are essential for reducing stress, improving focus, and maximizing productivity. The mind, like a muscle, needs rest periods to avoid fatigue and perform at its best.

3. Stop _____ (which is a snare; plan to avoid the trap). Start **thinking critically**. Examine your motive.

- a. **Being Critical** wants to tear something down, to break something, deconstruct, by bringing problems not solutions, to make me feel better about me. It often carries personal judgment that focuses on fault-finding. Being critical can be emotionally charged, harsh, and directed at people rather than their work or ideas.
- b. **Thinking critically** is for the betterment of others. Critical thinking is a constructive, analytical process of evaluating ideas to gain a deeper understanding. It applies a logical and objective approach to analyze information and arguments.

4. Stop _____.

To generate solutions,

- a. **Take a break:** Step away from the problem for a while. Go for a walk, sleep, or engage in a distracting activity to clear your mind and reduce stress.
- b. **Engage in a flow state:** Immerse yourself in a hobby or activity that requires your full attention, like crafting, art, or playing a video game, to help channel your problem-solving energy constructively.

Reject Passivity, Embrace Initiative

You don't need a title to start solving problems. Initiative is one of the strongest signals of leadership potential. And while authority brings a sense of control, ownership brings that too. On the other hand, passivity, which is a feeling of a lack of control, causes me to sit on my hands. Use your margin to make better **within your existing area of responsibility**. If you feel stuck:

1. **Choose anything that you can own.** What was dropped but never picked up? Find something that nobody else wants to do and what needs to change.
2. **Plan, and make margin to plan.** No plan is a plan. Don't be reactive but proactive and prepared. Have a plan.
3. **Respond to what is most important to the boss (not just situations).** Ask: what has my boss established as the greatest win, what is causing him/her stress, can I today take steps to begin to fix/change it?

Your solutions must be run past existing leaders.
Grow and practice emotional intelligence so you...

Improve your Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Improving emotional intelligence (EI) is a learnable skill that is crucial for career advancement and professional relationships. Individuals with high EQ navigate social situations effectively, manage stress, and communicate clearly, all of which contribute to success. In contrast, a low EQ can lead to career-limiting behaviors like lacking empathy, blaming others, and engaging in frequent conflict.

You will never passively find what you do not actively pursue.
~ Tim Cooper

Strategies to grow your emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence can be developed through a focus on its four core components:

1. Develop _____

Understand your own feelings, behaviors, strengths, and weaknesses.

- **Journal your emotions:** Reflect on your interactions. Ask yourself what triggered certain feelings and how you responded. Look for patterns in your behavior.
- **Seek honest feedback:** Get feedback from managers, peers, and colleagues. This can reveal blind spots in how you are perceived.
- **Observe your triggers:** Notice what situations or people provoke a strong emotional response in you then be prepared to control your reaction.

2. Practice _____

Learn to control and redirect your emotions and impulses in a healthy way.

- **Pause before reacting:** Instead of immediately reacting to a stressful situation, take a moment to pause, breathe, and gather your thoughts.
- **Manage your stress:** Find healthy outlets for stress, such as exercise, mindfulness, or hobbies, so you don't take it out on your colleagues.
- **Reframe negative thoughts:** Challenge pessimistic self-talk by focusing on the positive aspects of a situation or the lessons learned from setbacks.

3. Enhance _____

Develop the ability to understand the emotions and perspectives of others.

- **Practice active listening:** When in a conversation, put away distractions and pay attention to the speaker's non-verbal cues. Avoid interrupting. Summarize.
- **Practice empathy:** Make a conscious effort to put yourself in others' shoes. Try to understand why they might be feeling or acting a certain way.
- **Read the room:** Observe the dynamics and emotional climate of meetings.

4. Refine _____

Strengthen your ability to build trust, inspire others, and handle conflict constructively.

- **Give constructive feedback:** When providing criticism, be considerate and focus on the behavior, not the person. Frame feedback as a learning opportunity.
- **Address conflict:** Find common ground with a mutually beneficial resolution.
- **Express gratitude:** Acknowledge and thank colleagues for their contributions. Showing appreciation can build morale and strengthen working relationships.

Build Trust Through Relationships

Leadership flows through trust more than rules. Invest in people, listen deeply, and demonstrate integrity. When people trust you, they'll allow you to influence them.

The words you use, when you share your idea, are bricks that will either build a bridge of relationship for your idea, or a wall of distrust.

Words matter. ~ Clay Scroggins

Don't	Why
Frequently compare the WHAT of another organization	
Emphatically say "this isn't working."	
Say "this wasn't thought through."	

Leverage Influence Over Authority

Authority can compel compliance, but influence creates genuine followership. Influence grows from character, competence, and consistency. The goal of leadership is to help others thrive, not to control them. **Some things can't be skimmed (like great chocolate chip cookie ingredients). When leading up, don't challenge without these ingredients:**

1. The you have with the person do they like you, do you respect them, do you genuinely want what is best for your boss? If not, wait until you do.

It turns out that trust is in fact earned in the smallest of moments.
It is earned not through heroic deeds, or even highly visible actions,
but through paying attention, listening, and
gestures of genuine care and connection. ~ Brené Brown

2. Practice to build trust. You're not in it for yourself.
Be faithful with what you DO have.

"Find the most generous explanation for each other's behavior and believe it." ~ Marckus Buckingham: *The One Thing You Need To Know About Great Managing, Great Leading, and Sustained Individual Success*

3. is everything. Bring up disagreements when emotions are low and speaking in hypotheticals. Ask, "when I disagree with you, what is the best way to bring that up?" By pausing and waiting to react to something that causes anger, you can prevent a rash response and think more clearly, leading to a better outcome.

The greatest remedy for anger is delay.
~ Seneca the Younger ~ Thomas Paine

4. privately, publicly.

Context matters. Feelings matter and everybody has them. Put in the time before hand.

- **ADMIT** you don't know everything or have all the information.
- **DECLARE INTENTION** – e.g.: "I think I have an idea to make us better; can I share that with you?"
- **APPROACH WITH GENUINE CURIOSITY** – e.g.: "I know I've got a lot of thoughts about this and I bet you do too. Tell me what you think about X and how you're processing it."
- **POSITIVE FEELINGS.** How does your boss feel when your name pops up on his/her phone? And vice versa, how do you feel when your boss' name appears on your phone?

Prepare yourself for NO and be prepared to walk away.

It could be a "not yet" and find a new approach. Think Thomas Edison.

Live life on purpose.

Everything we do should prepare us for something better.
~ Scott Adams book, *How to Fail at Almost Everything and Still Win Big: Kind of the Story of My Life*. And, the creator of the comic strip Dilbert.

5. Emotional **POSTURE (approach and tone)** is determined by thoughts and feelings – what you tell yourself about yourself and your manager. Choose to trust your boss. Your approach is customized to each person.

Human beings are the only creatures who are able to
behave irrationally in the name of reason." ~ Ashley Montagu

6. **STAY** in the balcony to remain emotionally neutral. The Stage has emotion. The Balcony is an observer and reflecting which allows for rational and objective thinking. When our emotions rise, our ability to think rationally declines (e.g.: nervous and anxiousness makes us forget people's names). If you can't keep emotions in check, you're not ready to have a conversation. Use emotional maturity and wait until you do.

95% of your emotions are determined by the way that you talk to yourself. ~ Brian Tracy

7. Find the **MEANING and PURPOSE** of the change. Find the WHY in the WHAT. The WHY is the primary motivator for customers, and the company's products and actions serve as evidence of those core beliefs.

*People don't buy **what** you do; they buy **why** you do it.
And what you do simply proves what you believe. ~ Simon Sinek*

Conclusion

You are building a reputation for yourself and your leadership. It is RIGHT NOW even if you're not in charge. ___ of people leave companies because of their boss. What you do (work), whom you do it with (team), and how much money you make are all factors, so as an emerging leader, what is your role and responsibility?

You don't need to wait for permission to lead. Leadership is not about the power you hold but about the person you are becoming. By cultivating self-awareness, demonstrating initiative, staying positive, and building trust, you can lead from wherever you are — and your influence will open doors to greater opportunities.

*Without character, there is no credibility; and
without credibility, there is no trust. ~ Warren G. Bennis*
