



# THE SECOND LITTLE BOOK OF LEADERSHIP

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If you are online, look out for links in this book as you read it.  
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[Phil Dourado](#) (Aha! There's one...)

WHAT  
LEADERS  
DO

(IN JUST TWO WORDS)

# *Create meaning*

Leadership experts have spent the past decade or so coming slowly (and with far too many words) to this two-word conclusion about what leaders do in a fast-changing world.

HOW WE  
LEARN TO  
BE LEADERS



Leadership is viral, in a sense. We learn by ‘emulating’ or copying those we want to be like, often subconsciously, without realizing we are doing it. If you want people to behave a certain way, don’t tell them to do it. Model the way yourself.

**Phil Dourado**

THEY KNOW  
WHO YOU  
REALLY ARE!

*“Who you are speaks so loudly,  
that I cannot hear what you say.”*

**- Emerson**

We tune out what people say if there is a dissonance - a discord - between what they say and what they do. So, you actually communicate as a leader by ‘doing’, not by ‘saying’. As Thomas Edison put it, “What you are will show in what you do.”



THE GOOD  
LEADER IS...

*“A good leader is he\* whom people revere.  
An evil leader is he whom people despise.  
A great leader is he of whom the people  
say ‘We did it ourselves’ ”*

**- Lao Tsu**

*\* (Or ‘she’, of course)*

A good leader inspires people to have confidence in their leader. A great leader inspires people to have confidence in themselves. (That’s usually attributed to Eleanor Roosevelt, but I’m pretty sure it’s originally from Lao Tsu; it’s just a different translation of the above quote).

THE GOOD  
LEADER IS...

(TAKE 2)

*“A good leader is a person who takes a little more than their share of the blame and a little less than their share of the credit.”*

- **John Maxwell**

THE LEADER'S  
FOUR MOST  
IMPORTANT WORDS

# “*What do you think?*”

- **Tom Peters**, *the ‘uber-guru’ of management and leadership*

## **So, what do I do with these four words?**

Use them every day. Peters says keep count - he says he does it on a piece of paper that he keeps in his pocket - of how many times you use ‘What do you think?’ every day. It is, he says, possibly your most powerful and least-used leadership tool.

These four words turn leadership from a monolog (*you tell*) to a dialog (*the people you work with contribute to leadership thinking and decisions*).

STOP TAKING  
DECISIONS

START MAKING  
THINGS HAPPEN

*‘Too many managers mistake decisions for action. A decision is not the same as action. Use plans, analysis, meetings & presentations to INSPIRE deeds, not as a substitute for action.’*

- **Stanford Professor Robert Sutton**



THE SECRET  
OF HIGH  
PERFORMANCE

According to [Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi](#), author of the book Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience, people perform to a higher level when they:

1. are faced with **achievable challenge**
2. receive **regular feedback**
3. **are completely engaged** by the task or overall purpose

By 'flow' the author means that state of being 'in the zone' that athletes describe or of work 'flowing', with time appearing to fly by and you feel totally engaged in the task or goal.

Q: WHAT DO  
GREAT LEADERS  
INSPIRE?

# A: Discretionary effort

**Steve Nielsen, former director of the FedEx Leadership Institute puts it this way:**

*“Discretionary effort...is an employee’s desire to go beyond the collecting of a salary. It is a willingness to be interested and involved in assisting the organization in the accomplishment of corporate goals.”*

FROM ME  
TO WE

**Leadership is often described as a shift in thinking and focus from ‘me’ to ‘we’.**

If leaders fail, it is often because they have failed to make this shift in focus from producing results yourself to getting the best results from others.

**Take this further?**

There’s a nice piece on the Harvard Business website, called [‘Moving from ‘me’ to ‘we’](#). It takes about five minutes to read.

GREAT  
LEADERS  
KISS

(KEEP IT SIMPLE, STUPID)

*“Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate, and doubt to offer a solution everybody can understand.”*

*- General Colin Powell*

Simple is clever. Complicated just means you haven't been clever enough to reduce 'it' to its essence. Whatever 'it' is. Too many organizations still assume the reverse – the more complicated something sounds, the more 'clever' it must be. And they are suspicious of 'simple', assuming it means 'unsophisticated'. These are insecure organizations with insecure leaders. **Phil Dourado**



STOP TELLING  
PEOPLE  
WHAT TO DO

## William M. McKnight, founder of 3M:

“As our business grows, it becomes increasingly necessary to delegate responsibility and to ***encourage men and women to exercise their initiative***. This requires considerable tolerance. Those men and women to whom we delegate authority and responsibility, ***if they are good people, are going to want to do their job in their own way***. Mistakes will be made. But if a person is essentially right, the mistakes he or she makes are not as serious in the long run as the mistakes management will make if it undertakes to tell those in authority exactly how they must do their jobs. ***Management that is destructively critical when mistakes are made kills initiative***. And it’s essential that we have many people with initiative if we are to continue to grow.”

SEE THE  
'GREAT'  
IN PEOPLE

*“Treat people as if they are what they could be, and they will become what they are capable of being.”*

**- Goethe**

IT'S NOT  
A WAR  
FOR TALENT

*“How do you win? By getting average players to play good, and good players to play great. That’s how you win.”*

**- Bum Phillips, American football coach**

Everyone talks about ‘The War for Talent’, from the book of the same name by McKinsey consultant Ed Michaels, as if there’s a scarce resource out there and you have to attract the best current performers to win. That’s dead wrong. The best leaders get people who had previously performed to ‘ordinary’ levels to play a level above. You do that by helping them see what they are capable of.

# THE FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

***“My formula for success is:  
Rise early.  
Work late.  
Strike oil.”***

**- Oil magnate J. P. Getty**

Yes, it's a joke. But, there's a truth in it about making your own luck. Recent research, by interesting thinkers like [Richard Wiseman](#), suggests that great leaders can make their own luck, in effect. As Pasteur said “Luck comes to the prepared mind”. And, as golfer Gary Player replied when told he was a lucky golfer, “It's funny how the more I practice, the luckier I get.” [Two interesting articles on luck and leadership.](#)



LEADERS CREATE  
MORE LEADERS,  
NOT FOLLOWERS

*“A manager asked me how to get a group of janitors to take responsibility instead of ducking it. I asked who manages the supplies, cleaning schedules, keeping within budgets, etc. He said he did. I advised him to cede it all, step by step to the janitors. Let them set the schedules. Show them how to do the budgeting. He felt this was not possible with manual workers. But much of what we have to do today is turn manual workers into knowledge workers. The janitors now do the planning AND the doing. The supervisor serves them. He has become a servant leader. Costs are down, incidentally...*

**Source:** My notes from listening to the late, great [Stephen R Covey](#)

TAKE PEOPLE  
TO THE EDGE

*“Come to the edge”, he said.  
They said, “We are afraid.”  
“Come to the edge”, he said.  
They came.  
He pushed them.  
And they flew.*

**- Christopher Logue**

(That poem is usually ascribed to Apollinaire, but it was actually Christopher Logue writing about Apollinaire). Great leaders take people out of their comfort zone and overcome their fear of stretching beyond what they think they can do. You do that by ‘seeing’ the potential in people that they can’t see themselves. [Walt Disney](#) was great at doing this, apparently.

WATCH  
YOUR  
MOOD

(BECAUSE THEY ARE WATCHING)

*“A leader’s mood is infectious. It can spread like wildfire through an organization. You can poison or uplift the mood without realizing it.”*

**- Mike Harris,**

*Founding CEO of First Direct, the world’s most popular bank*

REFUSE  
TO  
COMPETE

*“We still use old warfare metaphors for business leadership, quoting ancient Chinese generals and applying them to business. But ‘beat the enemy’ doesn’t work. You need to compete to be unique, not the best.”*

**Source:** My notes from an interview with Harvard Professor Michael Porter.



ACT  
'AS IF...'

*“If you’re not sure what to do, think of a leader you admire, think ‘What would Richard Branson/Jack Welch/Mother Theresa (whoever it is) do in this situation?’ Then act ‘as if...’ you are that leader.”*

**Source:** I learnt that from [Simon Woodroffe](#), founder of YO! Sushi, when we were thinking of writing a book together.

# THE NEW RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

***These are the eight things you need to provide as a leader, to ensure people are engaged and agree to be led by you***

1. Meaningful Work
2. Autonomy (job ownership - the ability to take own decisions)
3. Connectedness with Colleagues
4. Connectedness with Leader (that's you)
5. Collaboration
6. Recognition
7. Fairness
8. Growth

From a study carried out by the Ken Blanchard Group of Companies

# THE NEW GOLDEN RULE

Every major religion has the Golden Rule at its heart: 'Do as you would be done by'.

Only it's not quite right. Because it assumes we are all the same, all want the same.

The New Golden Rule for leaders is...

***DO TO OTHERS  
AS THEY WOULD  
HAVE YOU DO  
UNTO THEM***

Don't assume other people want to be treated the same way you do. You only know what they want if you ask them. ***Phil Dourado***

WORLD'S  
SIMPLEST  
LEADERSHIP  
SECRET

“The trick is to manage individuals the way that **THEY** want to be managed, rather than the way that **YOU’d** prefer to be managed. The only way to do this is to **ASK**.

***In your first (or next) meeting with each direct report ask:***

1. How do you prefer to be managed?
2. What can I do to help you excel (that I’m not doing at the moment)?
3. What types of management annoy you (in particular, what do I do ‘to’ you that you’d rather I stop doing)?

**Source:** [Geoffrey James](#)



**EVEN  
SIMPLER  
VERSION**

**(TO PUT THE NEW GOLDEN RULE INTO PRACTICE)**

**Ask your direct reports these questions in your regular 1to1 sessions. And/or have this ‘leadership conversation’ regularly with your team in open team discussion.**

1. What should I **START** doing that I don’t do now, to help you develop and perform?
2. What should I **STOP** doing as you feel it’s holding you back from producing your best work?
3. What should I **CONTINUE** doing in how I manage and lead you, to get the best performance possible from you and your people?

**Source:** *Lissy Thornquist, a leader I admire a lot, took the standard ‘Start, Stop, Continue’ continuous improvement questions and applied them to how she leads, as a framework for regular 1to1s with direct reports. And it works both ways; you can get your direct reports to ask you similar ‘What should I Start, Stop, Continue?’ questions in return.*

THREE THINGS  
YOU MUST DO  
TO LEAD  
CHANGE

## Edgar Schein's Top 3 Success Factors in Leading Change

1. **What a leader attends to, measures, rewards and controls** is the main factor affecting culture. (*'Culture' is 'the way we do things around here' - how people behave*)
2. **How leaders react to critical incidents.** (*Like a downturn. Or when things are going wrong. Do you or members of your team get defensive, go on the attack, support, blame?*)
3. **Leader role-modelling and coaching.** (*Put basically, they copy how you behave. And they will blossom and grow if you coach them. Personally. And they will then do the same to their subordinates. So, what you do cascades. 'Top-down' change isn't a 'program'. It's personal.*)

**Source:** I learnt that from my friend [Prof Aidan Halligan](#). Edgar Schein is possibly the world's leading expert on workplace culture. The above is from his studies into how to change the way people behave at work.

*Finally...*

A WORD FROM  
ALBERT  
EINSTEIN

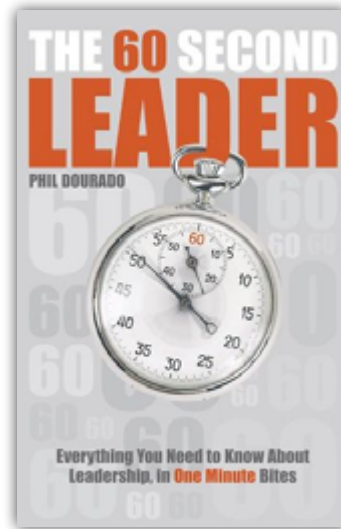
## **Break your habits**

*‘How many people are trapped in their everyday habits; part numb, part frightened, part indifferent? To have a better life we must keep choosing how we are living’.*

*- Albert Einstein.*

Challenge inertia and your own habits, and the habits within your organization that may now be out-dated, to change ‘the way we do things around here’ for the better.

**Want more?  
Buy the book**



**by  
Phil Dourado**  
Published by Capstone

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