LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

LeaderShift

by John C. Maxwell

Eleven changes a leader must make inside themselves to keep leading well while the world keeps changing.

BEST POINTS FROM THE BOOK

01 **Keep learning, unlearning, and relearning - that habit powers every leadershift.**

Maxwell defines a leadershift as the ability and willingness to make a leadership change that improves both you and your organization. It starts with letting go of what worked yesterday, because today's best will not meet tomorrow's challenges.

02 **Shift from soloist to conductor.**

A soloist shines alone; a conductor makes the whole orchestra sound great. Your focus moves from me to we - ask every day how you can add value to others and help them reach their potential.

03 **Shift from goals to growth.**

Goals have finish lines; growth never ends, and becoming better beats doing better. Chick-fil-A founder Truett Cathy focused on getting better, trusting customers would then demand the company get bigger.

04 **Shift from perks to price.**

Wanting leadership for the corner office, title, and pay is having it backward. Real leaders are motivated by what they give, and they gladly pay the price leadership costs.

05 **Shift from pleasing people to challenging people.**

You cannot please everyone - roughly a quarter of people will never be happy and a quarter will follow you no matter what. You are in the leadership business, not the friendship business: set expectations early and ask people for their best.

06 **Shift from maintaining to creating.**

Maintaining is coasting on tradition, and it is often rewarded with tenure. Creating means leaving the comfort zone for the creative zone - believing everything can improve, saying yes to new ideas, and accepting failure as part of the process.

07 **Shift from ladder climbing to ladder building.**

First you climb the ladder, then you hold it for others, then you extend it by mentoring. The highest stage is helping others build ladders of their own, so your leadership reproduces itself.

08 **Shift from directing to connecting.**

Directing is top-down orders; connecting is side-by-side - asking questions, listening, and finding common ground. You will always lead more effectively when you ask people questions instead of just handing them answers.

09 **Shift from team uniformity to team diversity.**

A team of people just like you shares your blind spots. Diverse people fill gaps in knowledge, perspective, and experience - Lincoln deliberately built a cabinet of fierce rivals to get the best advice.

10 **Shift from positional authority to moral authority.**

A title is the least influential form of authority - it gets compliance, not loyalty. Moral authority is influence based on who you are: character and consistency that people recognize and choose to follow.

11 **Shift from trained leaders to transformational leaders.**

Trained leaders know how to lead; transformational leaders know why they lead. They see what others do not see, are transformed themselves first, and then create change in the people around them.

12 **Shift from career to calling.**

A career chases advancement, pay, and status. A calling merges your skills, gifts, character, and experience into your reason for existing - some people wake up to an alarm, others wake up to a calling.

THE BOOK, IN SHORT

Change now moves so fast that a long-range plan that once stretched ten years now covers about two. Maxwell's answer is the leadershift: the ability and willingness to make a leadership change that positively enhances organizational and personal growth. The book lays out eleven shifts he made over his own leadership career, framed by a first chapter on staying nimble - like a cheetah, whose real weapon is not speed but the ability to change direction mid-stride. Its seven working habits include continually learning, unlearning, and relearning, valuing yesterday while living in today, and moving forward courageously in the midst of uncertainty.

The early shifts are about focus, development, and cost. Leaders must move from soloist to conductor, making others shine instead of starring alone; from goals to growth, because goals end but becoming better compounds for life; and from perks to price, trading the office, title, and paycheck mindset for a glad willingness to pay what leadership costs.

The middle shifts are about people. Stop pleasing everyone and start challenging people to be their best. Stop merely maintaining what exists and start creating what does not. Climb your ladder, then hold it, extend it, and finally build ladders for others. Trade directing for connecting - questions and

listening over orders - and build diverse teams instead of surrounding yourself with copies of yourself.

The final shifts are about influence and impact. Positional authority is the weakest kind; moral authority, earned through character and consistency, is what people actually follow. Trained leaders know how to lead, but transformational leaders know why, and they change people, not just processes. And the last shift turns a career into a calling - work that merges your skills, gifts, and experience into your purpose.

The thread through all eleven: you cannot be the same, think the same, and act the same if you hope to succeed in a world that does not remain the same. Every advance you make as a leader will require a leadershift, and Maxwell closes by saying more shifts are still out there - the leaders who keep growing will be the ones who find them.

DO THIS WEEK

This week, pick one shift - soloist to conductor is a good first one. For seven days, in every meeting ask questions and hand the visible work to others instead of doing the star task yourself, and each morning ask Maxwell's two conductor questions: How can I add value to others today, and what opportunities do I have to help them?

By John C. Maxwell, first published 2019 by HarperCollins Leadership. Read it if you already lead and feel your old playbook slipping; it is Maxwell's book on staying flexible.