The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader
By John C. Maxwell

1. CHARACTER: Be a Piece of the Rock
   What must every person know about character?
   • Character is more than talk
   • Talent is a gift, but character is a choice
   • Character brings lasting success with people
   • Leaders cannot rise above the limitations of their character

2. CHARISMA: The impression Can Seal the Deal
   To make yourself the kind of person who attracts others, you need to personify these pointers:
   • Love Life
   • Put a “10” on Every Person’s Head
   • Give People Hope
   • Share Yourself

3. COMMITMENT: It Separates Doers from Dreamers
   What is the true nature of Commitment? Take a look at three observations.
   • Commitment Starts in the Heart
   • Commitment is Tested by Action
   • Commitment Opens the door to Achievement

4. COMMUNICATION: Without it you Travel alone
   You can be a more effective communicator if you follow four basic truths.
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- Simplify your Message
- See the Person
- Show the Truth
- Seek a Response

5. **COMPETENCE:** If you Build It, They will Come
   If you want to cultivate this quality, here’s what you need to do.
   - Show up Every Day
   - Keep Improving
   - Follow Through with Excellence
   - Accomplish More than Expected

6. **COURAGE:** One Person with Courage Is a Majority
   As you approach the tough decisions that challenge you, recognize these truths about courage:
   - Courage begins with an Inward Battle
   - Courage is Making things Right, Not Just Smoothing Them Over
   - Courage in a Leader Inspires Commitment from Followers
   - Your Life Expands in Proportion to Your Courage

7. **DISCERNMENT:** Put an End to Unsolved Mysteries
   Discernment is an indispensable quality for any leader who desires to maximize effectiveness. It helps to do several important things.
   - Discover the Root Issues
   - Enhance Your Problem Solving
   - Evaluate Your Options for Maximum Impact
   - Multiple Your Opportunities

8. **FOCUS:** The Sharper It Is, the Sharper You Are
   The important question is, How should you focus your time and energy? Use these guidelines to help you:
   - Focus 70% on Strengths
   - Focus 25% on New Things
   - Focus 5% on Areas of Weakness

9. **GENEROSITY:** Your Candle Loses Nothing When It Lights Another
   Cultivate the quality of generosity in your life. Here’s how:
   - Be Grateful for Whatever you Have

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- Put People First
- Don’t Allow the Desire for Possessions to Control You
- Regard Money as a Resource
- Develop the Habit of Giving

10. INITIATIVE: You Won’t Leave Home Without It
What qualities do leaders possess that enable them to make things happen? There are at least four.
- They Know What They Want
- They Push Themselves to Act
- They Take More Risks
- They Make More Mistakes

11. LISTENING: To Connect with Their Hearts, Use Your Ears
As you think about how to spend your listening time, keep in mind that you have two purposes for listening: to connect with people and to learn. For that reason, you should keep your ear open to these people.
- Your Followers
- Your Customers
- Your Competitors
- Your Mentors

12. PASSION: Take This Life and Love It
Take a look at four truths about passion and what it can do for you as a leader.
- Passion is the First Step to Achievement
- Passion Increases your Willpower
- Passion Changes You
- Passion Makes the Impossible Possible

13. POSITIVE ATTITUDE: If You Believe You Can, You Can
To learn more about what it means to be positive, think on these things:
- Your Attitude Is a Choice
- Your Attitude Determines Your Actions
- Your People are a Mirror of Your Attitude
- Maintaining a Good Attitude is Easier Than Regaining One

14. PROBLEM SOLVING: You Can’t Let Your Problems Be a Problem
Leaders with good problem-solving demonstrate five qualities:
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- They Anticipate Problems
- They Anticipate the Truth
- They See the Big Picture
- They Handle One Thing at a Time
- They Don’t Give Up a Major Goal When They’re Down

15. RELATIONSHIPS: If You Get Along, They’ll Go Along
What can a person do to manage and cultivate good relationships as a leader? It requires three things:
- Have a Leader’s Head—Understand People
- Have a Leader’s Heart—Love People
- Extend a Leader’s Hand—Help People

16. RESPONSIBILITY: If You Won’t Carry the Ball, You Can’t Lead the Team
These are the characteristics of people who embrace Responsibility:
- They Get the Job Done
- They Are Willing to Go the Extra Mile
- They Are Driven by Excellence
- They Produce Regardless of the Situation

17. SECURITY: Competence Never Compensates for Insecurity
Insecure leaders are dangerous—to themselves, their followers, and the organization they lead—because a leadership position amplifies personal flaws. Whatever negative baggage you have in life only gets more difficult to bear when you’re trying to lead others.

Insecure leaders have several common traits:
- They Don’t Provide Security for Others
- They Take More from People than They Give
- They Continually Limit Their Best People
- They Continually Limit the Organization

18. SELF-DISCIPLINE: The First Person You Lead Is You
If you want to become a leader for whom self-discipline is an asset, follow these action points:
- Develop and Follow Your Priorities
- Make a Disciplined Lifestyle Your Goal
- Challenge Your Excuses
- Remove Rewards Until the Job Is Done

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19. SERVANTHOOD: To Get Ahead, Put Others First
What does it mean to embody the quality of servanthood? A true servant leader:
• Puts Others Ahead of His Own Agenda
• Possesses the Confidence to Serve
• Initiates Service to Others
• Is Not Position-Conscious
• Serves Out of Love

20. TEACHABILITY: To Keep Leading, Keep Learning
If you want to grow your organization, you have to remain teachable. Here are five guidelines to help you cultivate and maintain a teachable attitude:
• Cure Your Destination Disease
• Overcome Your Success
• Swear Off Shortcuts
• Trade in Your Pride
• Never Pay Twice for the Same Mistakes

21. VISION: You Can Seize Only What You Can See
Show me a leader without vision, and I’ll show you someone who isn’t going anywhere. To get a handle on vision and how it comes to be a part of a good leader’s life, understand these things:
• Vision Starts Within
• Vision Draws on Your History
• Vision Meets Other’s Needs
• Vision Helps you Gather Resources

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