

The Principles of Leadership

Demonstrated by Jesus Christ

Jesus the master teacher, knowing the hearts of all men, was uniquely qualified to draw out the fullest potential in each of His disciples. Three marks of his equipping model were: 1) His unconditional love and acceptance, 2) His unparalleled charisma marking each believer with an eternal sense of belonging, and 3) His power to bring a sense of competency and success in and through a personal relationship with Himself. As a son apprenticed to His father's trade, Jesus is our finest model for equipping His people. Jesus' confession is "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does" (John 5:19). God's response was "Apart from Him you can do absolutely nothing," (John 15:5).

A. B. Bruce in *The Training of the Twelve*, has identified patterns of disciple-making used by Jesus. Bruce suggests that Jesus considered the training he had given the disciples the principle part of his own earthly ministry. This education of the disciples clearly indicated that the Master Teacher's influence on the world should be permanent. Ada Lum writes, *Jesus did not make mere converts He made disciples who learned to train disciple-makers.*

1. HE MADE THE SELECTIONS PERSONALLY.

Jesus selected the men He needed for the task, which was first clarified in His mind and heart (Mark 3:13). He made His selections only after careful observation and prayer. In each selection, He determined that the task fit the gifts of the person.

Possible Application: In companies with fewer than 150 employees it might be possible for the CEO to be involved at some point in the interviewing process. One CEO of a manufacturing plant literally works at every new workstation before writing a job description and hiring a person to operate the station. Every new person on the payroll will be interviewed by him at some point in the process.

2. HE OBSERVED THEM AT LEAST ONE YEAR.

During the "observation period" the disciples were "initial believers." They were not yet His constant companions (Mark 1:14; 3:12). The Disciples were carefully taught their specific responsibilities: being companions to Jesus, preaching the gospel of salvation in Christ and driving out evil spirits. During the "observation period," their specific job descriptions were clarified and the nature of their task better understood.

Possible Application: Every new employee should be carefully introduced to the culture of your company. All employees need to have a period of probation or understanding during which they are encouraged to expand on the basic tenets of their job description and their understanding of the task at hand.

3. HE INVOLVED THEM IN HIS LIFE, LIVING TRANSPARENTLY BEFORE THEM.

Jesus was always present *alongside* His disciples. He did not *lord it over* them or try to impress them with His success, power or authority (Phil. 2). He shared His spirit with them until they

caught His vision (Mk :14; Jn 17:6-8). He permitted a great number of interruptions, letting them try his patience. He did not hide shortcomings, seek extra advantage or privilege.

Possible Application: Living transparently with others is not an easy task. It involves a decision to allow Jesus to control the relationship and to walk in humility. Some of the very best testimonies given by employees focus on the personal relationship they have had with the owner or CEO of their company. Productivity and company culture is greatly determined by the attitude and behavior of the CEO while dealing with employees and corporate decision-making. The model Jesus gives to CEOs is clear and will work when applied in the company by the CEO.

4. JESUS SHOWED HIS DISCIPLES BY EXAMPLE EVERYTHING HE EXPECTED THEM TO LEARN.

Jesus was truly an "on the job trainer. "He never expected more of His Disciples than He was willing to do Himself. Head knowledge never became a substitute for action in the vocabulary of the Master. He knew that a picture is worth a thousand words. He was a master picture maker.

Possible Application: Modeling and mentoring are the key tools for Christian leadership in companies. Modeling is one of the very best teaching methods. Your company may need to consider the implementation of a mentoring program in order to encourage employees and managers to use a biblical method of training.

5. HIS TEACHING WAS CONSISTENT.

There is an unmistakable uniformity and compatibility about the teaching of Jesus. His teaching was primarily Kingdom oriented with emphasis on our personal relationship with God and our day-to-day relationship with others. The greatest of commandments He said is, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these," (Mk. 12:29-31).

Possible Application: As leaders of companies it is very important that our teaching be consistent. Saying one thing, doing another simply will not fly. "Adjusting" biblical teaching to fit a momentary flight into the flesh simply will not fly. We all need to work on "walking the talk."

6. HE MET INDIVIDUALLY WITH THE DISCIPLES ON A REGULAR BASIS.

Jesus encouraged questioning by His disciples. He seemed to enjoy clarifying and deepening their understanding and provoking their further reflection (Mk. 4:10-34; 7:17; 9:28). He knew that they needed to receive His personal attention if His teaching was to have a lasting effect.

Possible Application: Employees need personal attention on a regular basis. They need recognition and acceptance from the CEO of the company in order to develop their fullest potential, spiritually and vocationally.

7. HE WALKED HIS TALK.

Jesus lived and acted on what He taught (Mk. 10:13-16; 15:32-48). He never taught without using very practical examples and demonstrations that met personal needs in very practical ways. He was not a philosopher expressing lofty ideals. His words were few and His actions abundant.

Possible Application: A CEO is a walking witness (positive and/or negative) for Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3:1-3). Employees need to know that the CEO really means and lives what he professes to believe.

8. HE USED TEAMS IN MINISTRY ACTIVITIES.

Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs, two by two (Mk.: 7-13). When they were sent out, the disciples were assigned tasks that they could complete. They were not given impossible assignments. From the start, each disciple knew he was not on his own. Each of the disciples recognized that they needed to rely on each other to experience a full complement of spiritual gifts. Each apostolic twosome was a microcosm of the body of Christ.

Possible Application: Building a team in your company might be one of the greatest challenges the biblical order presents. Teams are established more easily in an atmosphere of humility and submission. Helping employees to understand their vocational and spiritual giftedness might be a good starting point for team building in your company.

9. HE EVALUATED THE DISCIPLES IN AN ENCOURAGING MANNER.

Jesus evaluated the disciples in an encouraging manner. His evaluations consisted of checking on their progress, not searching for reasons to find fault with them (Mk. 6:30; Lk. 10:17-24). He corrected them in an encouraging manner. He drew on their experiences and moved them step-by-step into spiritual maturity.

Possible Application: Peer review methods can be very destructive within a company if they are misdirected or mishandled by a thoughtless person. Any evaluation of an employee should focus on the development of the employee, vocationally and spiritually. Any other motive may not be appropriate.

10. HE RETREATED WITH HIS DISCIPLES FOR REST AND RELAXATION.

Jesus retreated with His disciples for rest, teaching and to avoid the stress and pressure of the crowds, (Mk.4:35-46; 6:31-32; 8:27-33).

Possible Application: Many CEOs are finding that a company management retreat works very positively within the company to produce greater creativity and innovation and harmony. The "change of pace" enables the management team to build relationships and find solutions thought impossible under normal situations.

11. HE PRAYED WITH AND FOR HIS DISCIPLES.

Jesus prayed with and for His Disciples (Lk.10:21-22, John 17).

Possible Application: Christian CEOs who pray regularly for employees find the process of developing their people to be an exciting task. Many companies hold daily or weekly prayer sessions for their people. The results being reported are exciting!

12. HE DELEGATED HIS WORK TO HIS DISCIPLES WITH TRUST AND AUTHORITY TO ACT.

Jesus proved His trust in His disciples by delegating both authority and ministry tasks to His disciples (Mk.16:14-20; Mt. 28:16-20; Jn. 20:19-23). Jesus took the risk! He really trusted His disciples! He did it more for their sake than His. He recognized that any person who is given a task to do without the authority to carry it out would end in frustration and resignation.

Possible Application: Delegation with authority is essential in the building of trust. When an employee realizes that he or she is trusted and empowered to act, they will usually take more interest and responsibility in doing the task.