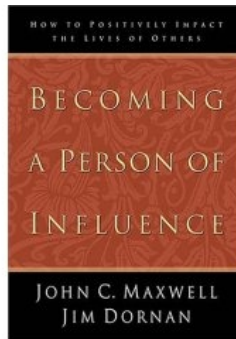




## Becoming a Person of Influence

How to Positively Impact the Lives of Others



**Author:** John Maxwell & Jim Dornan

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### ■ About the Author



John Maxwell

In 1985, **John Maxwell** founded The INJOY Group, a collection of three distinct companies that employ 200 people and provide resources and services that help people reach their personal and leadership potential. In addition to building a successful organization, John has authored more than thirty books, including the New York Times best sellers **The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership** and **Failing Forward**.

Called the nation's foremost expert on leadership, John was born in central Ohio five and a half decades ago. He credits his excellent leadership instincts and his early leadership training to his father, Melvin Maxwell, whom he followed into the ministry. For over twenty-five years, John led churches in Indiana, Ohio, and California.

In 1995, John began dedicating himself full-time to writing, speaking, and consulting. Each year he speaks live to more than 350,000 people. Known as a dynamic communicator, he is in high demand on the topic of leadership, and he speaks to many American corporations and entrepreneurial organizations.

John has earned bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees and has also received five honorary doctorates. He lives in Atlanta, Georgia.

Two of John's favorite books are **How to Win Friends & Influence People** by Dale Carnegie, and **As a Man Thinketh** by James Allen.

### ■ The Big Idea

The power to positively change your life and the lives of others depends on the degree of your influence. For John Maxwell, leadership IS influence. Jim Dornan agrees. Without influence, success is impossible. Famous people like Madonna, John Grisham, Mother Teresa, Bill Clinton, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Pablo Picasso and even Adolf Hitler are excellent examples of people with influence.

However, one need not be famous or be in a high-profile position to be a person of influence. Each person, whether he intends it or not, is an influencer. Parents wield influence over their children. Spouses influence each other. Teachers affect the futures of their students. Pastors impact their flocks' lives. Friends and colleagues you interact with shape your opinions. You influence peers, superiors, and subordinates. As long as you relate with somebody, you are an influencer.

Becoming a person of influence is not an instantaneous process. It takes time, effort, and the practice of certain behaviors. The authors define influence using the following keywords:

Integrity  
Nurture  
Faith  
Listen  
Understand  
Enlarge  
Navigate  
Connect  
Empower  
Reproduce

## ■ 4 Levels of Influence

The process of becoming a person of influence happens in stages:

### **State One: Modeling**

Observe how children naturally follow what their parents do, not what they say. Adults are also influenced by what they see their role models, mentors, and peers do. When there is an obvious and consistent connection between your good words and your actions, people will consider you credible, and your power to positively influence them will grow.

Influencing by modeling can impact a lot of people-- those who are around you, and even those who see you from afar. Famous people can be role models on a global scale for both good and bad.

### **State Two: Motivating**

The second level of influence requires a more up-close approach. You influence others by encouraging them and by communicating with them on an emotional level. This approach establishes connections and builds up people's confidence. Practice this and your level of influence increases. You increase your power to positively change yourself and others.

### **State Three: Mentoring**

Helping others reach their potential is the goal of a mentor. In this level, you need to be more focused on the individual whom you want to influence. You give more of yourself to your protégé, and help that person grow personally and professionally to reach a higher level of living.

### **State Four: Multiplying**

As you work on positively influencing other people, you should aim for them to become positive influencers as well. You want them to pass on what they have learned. To achieve this requires a higher level of commitment, personal investment, and generosity with time and other resources than the three previous steps.

The higher you go in the level of influence, the more value you add to the life of those you choose to influence.

## ■ A Person of Influence Has... Integrity with People

The dictionary definitions of integrity are: "adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; and honesty." Integrity is a vital piece to achieving business and personal success. Research studies conclude that integrity is the most needed quality to succeed in business. A person whose integrity has been compromised will find it extremely difficult to advance in any organization.

### 3 Truths About Integrity

1. Integrity Is Not Determined by Circumstances.
2. Integrity is Not Based on Credentials.
3. Integrity is Not to Be Confused with Reputation.

### Integrity Is Your Best Friend

Having integrity enables you to:

- Keep your priorities right
- Stay the right course even when the wrong course is easier
- Keep going when others criticize you unfairly
- Accept valid criticism and learn from them
- Keep growing

### Integrity Is Your Friends' Best Friend

When people know you are a person of integrity, and they do not have to worry about your motives, they welcome your efforts at influencing them and adding value to their lives.

### The Benefit of Integrity: Trust

Trust is like glue, holding people together, bonding personal and professional relationships. Trust is the result of having demonstrated consistent and solid character.

### The Benefit of Trust: Influence

Earning people's confidence is one key to influence. Your integrity must be without question to be able to influence others.

### Developing and Living Qualities of Integrity

Apply these principles daily:

- Model consistency of character.
- Employ honest communication.
- Value transparency.
- Exemplify humility.
- Demonstrate your support of others.
- Fulfill your promises.
- Embrace an attitude of service.
- Encourage two-way participation with the people you influence.

### Become a Person of Integrity

Consistently being a person of integrity may mean having to make tough choices. But always choose integrity. Remember to:

- Commit yourself to honesty, reliability, and confidentiality
- Decide ahead of time that you don't have a price.
- Major in minor things. Consistently do what is right in the little things.
- Each day, do what you should do before doing what you want to do.

### ■ A Person of Influence... Nurtures Other People

Nurturing involves encouragement, recognition, assurance of security and giving hope; all these acts are borne out of a sincere concern for others. A good way to illustrate nurturing is to look at a mother taking care of her offspring. A mother protects, feeds, encourages, loves, and sustains the child. Follow the maternal example to be a person of influence.

When you encourage people, you make them feel good about themselves. This makes them open to your influence. Your goal, in influencing people, is to encourage them to a stage where they can be responsible for their own growth and confidence. Making them dependent on you is counterproductive and unhealthy for you as well as the person you are influencing.

#### A Nurturing Influencer Gives:

- **Love.** Express your love by telling them how much they mean to you, writing caring notes, patting them on the back, hugging them, making them feel appreciated.
- **Respect.** People respond well to people who respect their feelings, preferences, opinions, and contributions. Treat people with respect and you will find it easier to influence them.
- **Sense of Security.** People feel secure about you when they see consistency between your actions and your words and when they see you conform to a high moral code. They desire to follow you.
- **Recognition.** Feeling appreciated builds up and motivates people. Recognition means remembering names, taking time to show you care, making people a priority, and acknowledging their accomplishments.
- **Encouragement.** People are able to endure suffering and overcome adversity when they are supported and given encouragement. Give it, and people will follow you. Withhold it, and you cause a person to be unhealthy and unproductive.

#### The Person You Are Influencing Receives:

- **Positive Self-Worth.** Self-confidence, feeling good about themselves, enables people to succeed in all aspects of their lives work, school, relationships, and more.
- **Sense of Belonging.** This is one of the most basic human needs. People will do anything to belong. As a nurturer, you should look for ways to include others.
- **Perspective.** A person who is nurtured gains a perspective of himself and what he can possibly do. Nurturing makes people realize their value.
- **Feeling of Significance.** A person who feels significant feels the freedom to be her own person and live positively for herself and for others.
- **Hope.** A nurturer builds up hope. She reveals to you your potential and believes that you can reach that potential.

#### Becoming a Natural Nurturer

Anyone can be a nurturer to other people by:

- Committing to them

- Believing in them
- Being accessible to them
- Giving with no strings attached
- Giving them opportunities
- Lifting them to a higher level

### ■ A Person of Influence Has... Faith in People

Having faith in people goes beyond just speaking words of encouragement. It is more than just thinking well of somebody. Faith is action-focused. Believing in someone makes you an influencer and can enable that person to attain greatness. Putting your faith in others may mean taking chances, but the rewards far outweigh the risks.

#### **Facts About Faith in People**

1. Most people don't have faith in themselves.
2. Most people don't have someone who has faith in them.
3. Most people can tell when someone has faith in them.
4. Most people will do anything to live up to your faith in them.

#### **Becoming a Believer in People**

1. Believe in them before they succeed.
2. Emphasize their strengths.
3. List their past successes.
4. Instill confidence when they fail.
5. Experience some wins together.
6. Visualize their future success.
7. Expect a new level of living.

### ■ A Person of Influence... Listens to People

Listening is an indispensable skill for leaders. Without this ability, you cannot influence others. It is more important than talent, discernment, or charm. It is valuable because:

- Listening shows respect.
- Listening builds relationships
- Listening increases knowledge.
- Listening generates ideas.
- Listening builds loyalty.
- Listening is a great way to help others and yourself.

#### **Common Barriers to Listening**

- Overvaluing Talking
- Lacking Focus
- Experiencing Mental Fatigue
- Stereotyping
- Carrying Personal Emotional Baggage

- Being Preoccupied with Self

**Developing Listening Skills**

Author Brian Adams offers the following statistics to describe our daily activities:

- 9 % of the day is spent on writing
- 16 % is spent reading
- 30% is spent speaking
- 45% is spent listening

This convinces us how important listening is. Listening is not just the physical act of hearing. A student once said, "Listening is wanting to hear."

**Becoming a Better Listener**

1. Look at the speaker.
2. Don't interrupt.
3. Focus on understanding.
4. Determine the need at the moment.
5. Check your emotions.
6. Suspend your judgment.
7. Sum up at major intervals.
8. Ask questions for clarity.
9. Always make listening your priority.

**■ A Person of Influence... Understands People**

The rewards of understanding people are priceless and countless. It gives you satisfaction and enables you to positively impact your life as well as the lives of others. You might feel it important to express your ideas and feelings as a way of communicating with other people. What is more important is to understand other people's thoughts, feelings, aspirations, attitudes, behaviors, and the factors that inspire and motivate them.

**Why People Fail to Understand Others**

- **Fear.** You fear what you don't understand. When you do not overcome your fear, it produces a vicious cycle of not understanding. Intimidation prevents you from sharing your ideas. Common fears are focused on rejection, not being given due credit, being perceived as a threat, being labeled as a troublemaker, and job security risk.
- **Self-Centeredness.** Instead of focusing on your own interests, you should see things from other people's perspective. This kind of attitude takes commitment but also enables you to understand other people's points of view.
- **Failure to Appreciate Differences.** You must recognize and appreciate people's unique qualities. Differences in talent, culture, and temperament may produce more complex dynamics among people, but they also result in synergy and richness of relationships. Celebrate people's differences.
- **Failure to Acknowledge Similarities.** Everyone has hopes, fears,

sorrows, victories, and problems. That enables you to relate to others who experience things similar to what you experience.

**What We Need to Understand About People:**

- Everybody wants to be somebody.
- Nobody cares how much you know until he knows how much you care.
- Everybody needs somebody.
- Everybody can be somebody when somebody understands and believes in him.
- Anybody who helps somebody influences a lot of bodies.

**Choose to Understand Others**

It is a choice. If you desire to positively influence others, choose to understand them by:

- Possessing the other person's perspective
- Demonstrating personal empathy
- Having a positive attitude about people

**■ A Person of Influence... Enlarges People**

Enlarging people takes an even stronger commitment, for it means coming alongside the person you want to influence and really getting involved in his life. It involves mentoring. Mentoring is influencing others to turn their potential into reality. It is moving people to grow and develop their areas of strength. Enlarging others help them to:

- Raise their level of living as they develop gifts, talents, skills, and broaden their problem-solving abilities.
- Increase their potential for success as they improve their attitudes and learn new ways to think.
- Increase their capacity for growth as they become better equipped.
- Increase the potential of your organization as people achieve their potential.

**Make Yourself An Enlarger**

First, you have to be constantly growing and enlarging yourself before you are able to help others do the same. Examine yourself if you are moving towards achieving goals or if you are becoming complacent. Do not allow a day where you do not engage in an activity that brings about your personal growth. This helps you in your task of enlarging others.

**Carefully Choose Persons to Enlarge**

Though you want to model integrity to all people, you have to be selective in choosing whom to enlarge. Seek out the most promising people around you, those who are most receptive to growth. Keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. Select people whose philosophy is similar to yours.
2. Choose people with potential you genuinely believe in.
3. Select people whose lives you can positively impact.
4. Develop men and women to a level beyond their abilities.



5. Start when the time is right.

Remember to get people's permission before you start the efforts to enlarge them. Both mentor and protégé should agree and give it 100% effort.

**Make it a Priority to Take Them Through the Enlarging Process by:**

- Seeing their potential
- Casting a vision for their future
- Tapping into their passion
- Addressing character flaws
- Focusing on their strengths
- Enlarging them one step at a time
- Putting resources in their hands
- Exposing them to enlarging experiences
- Teaching them to be self-enlargers

### ■ A Person of Influence... Navigates for Other People

Everyone will encounter unpleasant situations, setbacks, or problems. Navigating means helping others through these situations. The authors compare this process to building bridges for people to cross from where they are to where they want to be.

#### **A Navigator Identifies the Destination**

Help people recognize where they want to go. Here are some clues to discovering their destination:

- What do they cry about? What touches their hearts? What are their passions and compassions?
- What do they sing about? What gives them joy? What gets them enthusiastic?
- What do they dream about? What are their visions and dreams?

#### **A Navigator Plots the Course**

Help people turn their visions and dreams into reality by plotting a course and setting goals. Give attention to these areas:

- Where they need to go
- What they need to know
- How they need to grow

#### **A Navigator Thinks Ahead**

Prepare people for the things they are going to face. Recognize problems before they become emergencies. To help them prepare for potential difficulties, help them understand that:

- Everybody faces problems.
- Successful people face more problems than unsuccessful people.
- Money doesn't solve problems.
- Problems provide opportunities for growth.



**A Navigator Makes Course Corrections**

Even the best-planned programs can go off-course. You need to equip people with problem-solving skills so they can get back on course. It would help to:

- Team them not to listen to doubting critics.
- Coach them not to be overwhelmed by challenges.
- Encourage them to seek simple solutions.
- Instill confidence in them.

**A Navigator Stays with the People**

Take the trip together with the people you are guiding. Travel alongside as a friend.

**■ A Person of Influence... Connects with People**

Connection is important for successful mentoring. Here are nine steps for connecting with people.

1. Don't take people for granted.
2. Possess a Make-A-Difference mindset.
3. Initiate movement toward them.
4. Look for common ground.
5. Recognize and respect differences in personality.
6. Find the key to others' lives.
7. Communicate from the heart.
8. Share common experiences.
9. Once connected, more forward.

**Cultivating A Make-A-Difference Mindset**

You have to:

- Believe you can make a difference.
- Believe what you share can make a difference.
- Believe the person you share with can make a difference.
- Believe that together you can make a big difference.

**■ A Person of Influence... Empowers People**

People are like ordinary paper that can become treasures in the hands of artists. When you empower people, you enable them to reach the highest levels of their personal and professional potential. Show people that you believe in them completely. Trust them with decisions. Give them permission to take on challenges. Delegate. Aim for a win-win situation where the empowerer loses nothing in the process of sharing authority with others.

**Qualifications of an Empower**

- Position
- Relationship
- Respect

- Commitment

All four are requisites to empowering.

### **Empowering Others to Their Potential**

Empowering takes a process of successively increasing the challenges and enlarging the authority. It starts from simple tasks that grow to more complex ones. Use the following steps in empowering others:

1. Evaluate them on their knowledge, skill, and desire.
2. Model for them the right attitudes and work ethics.
3. Give them permission to succeed. Expect it. Verbalize it. Reinforce it.
4. Transfer authority to them. Share your power and ability to get things done.
5. Publicly show confidence in them.
6. Supply them with honest, positive feedback. Privately coach them through mistakes and inadequacies. Applaud them when they make progress.
7. Release them to continue on their own as soon as they are ready.

### **The Results of Empowerment**

As you empower others, you will see the benefits to you, the persons you empower, and the organization. You will enjoy the freedom of being able to accomplish more in your personal and professional lives as you let others handle more responsibilities. Your organization moves towards success. The persons you empower enjoy the personal and professional growth that results from being mentored and empowered. Furthermore, the persons you empower start affecting your organization and society as they also start to influence other people and positively change their lives. Empowerment is more than just giving other people something to do. It's sharing your power so that many other people can benefit from your abilities.

### **■ A Person of Influence... Reproduces Other Influencers**

The ultimate goal of an influential leader is to multiply his capabilities and gifts by reproducing other leaders who will in turn influence other leaders. The outcome of doing so are:

- Raising your influence to a new level
- Raising the new leader's potential
- Multiplying resources
- Ensuring a positive future for the organization

### **Becoming a Reproducer**

Multiply your influence by following these principles:

- Lead yourself well.
- Look continually for potential leaders.
- Put the team first.
- Commit yourself to developing leaders, not followers.

### Moving From Maintenance to Multiplication

These five stages of living show us to strive for the highest level of influence: Multiplication.

1. **Scramble.** The morale in their organization is low and the attrition is high.
2. **Survival.** The organization is average and static with no one being developed to full potential.
3. **Siphon.** Some people are being developed to be better leaders but relationships are not strong enough to keep them in the organization.
4. **Synergy.** People are empowered to reach their full potential. There is great interaction that moves the organization to success.
5. **Significance.** People reach their potential, stay in the organization, and reproduce more leaders. The organization enjoys almost limitless growth.

### ■ You Can Be A Person of Influence

In summary, there are ten progressive steps to becoming a person of influence. Follow them, and you positively impact the lives of others, your organization, and society. You also receive much personal and professional reward.

Invest time and go through these steps to become a person of influence and positively change the world:

#### Modeling:

- Demonstrate Integrity to everyone you meet.

#### Motivating:

- Nurture people through encouragement and support.
- Have Faith in people to enable them to believe in themselves.
- Listen to people and build relationships with them.
- Understand people and help them achieve their dreams.

#### Mentoring:

- Enlarge people to increase their potential.
- Navigate with them through life's difficulties so they can become independent.
- Connect with people and move them to a higher level.
- Empower people to be the persons they were created to be.

#### Multiplying:

- Reproduce influential leaders and let your influence continue to grow through others.