

Episode 5 Leadership Guide

August 25, 2026

Achieving Your Full Leadership Potential (Part 2)

Inspiration:

Exceptional leaders never stop growing. They know what the pinnacle of leader development looks like and continually strive to achieve it. In doing so, they model the way for others and lead them to higher levels of motivation and performance. Exceptional leaders make a positive difference in the lives of people, teams, organizations, and communities. *Exceptional leaders are difference makers!*

So, are you willing to do what it takes to achieve your full potential and become and rise above the crowd to become an exceptional leader.

Key takeaways:

- You can find plenty of leadership tips and recommendations to help you lead better in books, articles, and podcasts, but if you want to achieve the pinnacle of leader development in the most direct route, you need structure in the form of an effective approach, framework, and process to help you identify where you are in your leadership growth journey and help you grow holistically.
- A leadership approach helps you transcend yourself from being self-centered and immediate gratification oriented to serving a higher purpose, helps you grow toward your full leadership potential, and guides your leadership decisions and behaviors, and should be:
 - **Morally Grounded.** People follow leaders they can trust, and the quality of our character is the biggest reason people will follow us.
 - **People-Centered.** People follow leaders who care about them and the greater humanity we are apart.
 - **Service-Oriented.** People follow leaders who serve a noble purpose because it gives them purpose and meaning.
 - **Future-Focused.** People follow leaders who can articulate an inspiring and meaningful vision because it gives them something noble to strive for.
 - **Growth Oriented.** People follow leaders who are competent and capable.

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Difference Makers Leadership Podcast focuses on developing leaders who make a positive difference in the lives of people, organizations, and communities. Its short format provides thought provoking insights and strategies for busy leaders. In contrast to the task-centered, authoritarian, and command and control leadership that dominates today's business, military commands, and government agencies, *Difference Makers: A Leadership Podcast* advocates for positive, human-centered leadership that take the form of servant, transformational, and transforming leadership approaches that help you achieve leadership excellence. Each episode will equip you with expert insights, strategies, methods, and actions to not only be more productive and successful, but also help you grow toward your full human potential and increase your leadership capacity.

Leadership Lessons:

1. **Exceptional leaders are trustworthy!** People follow leaders they can trust, and the quality of our character is the biggest reason people will follow us.
Be Morally Grounded.
Know what the right thing to is.
Do the right thing by all people.
2. **Exceptional leaders care about people—all people.** They put others first and serve the greater good. People follow leaders who care about them and the greater humanity we are apart.
Be People-Centered.
Know the people you are entrusted to lead.
Do look out for their welfare.
3. **Exceptional leaders are transcendent.** In rising above their own ego and self-serving interests they view leadership as a privilege, put others first, and serve the greater good. Most people, if they have a choice, will follow somebody who is part of something bigger, more purposeful, more meaningful, than somebody who was out for their own personal gain.
Be Service-Oriented
Know when and how to serve and add value
Do add value, draw others into service with you, and equip and empower others instead of rescuing them.
4. **Exceptional leaders lead strategically.** They have a vision for an ideal future and have a plan to achieve it. They lead with purpose and intentionality toward noble goals, and have an inclination for progress and innovation. People follow leaders who can articulate an inspiring and meaningful vision because it gives them something noble to strive for.
Be Future-Focused
Know what is taking place in the world around you.
Do envision the possibilities, have a vision for a better future, and have a plan to get there
5. **Exceptional leaders take responsibility for their own growth and development and do the necessary things to grow toward their full potential.** In doing so they model the way for others and inspire them to do the same. People follow leaders who are competent and capable. They follow leaders who can show them how to be better and more successful.
Be Growth Oriented.
Know what healthy, holistic growth looks like
Do the necessary thing that foster holistic growth and continually challenge yourself

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Final Takeaway:

Exceptional leaders lead with integrity, care about people, serve a higher purpose and the greater good, have a noble vision to strive for, and never stop learning.

Challenge Question: *How are you taking responsibility for your growth and development?*

Leadership Action: Reflect. Identify which of the above qualities you need to work on and make a plan on how you can develop them.

Write this down in your leadership journal.

*Don't just be a leader people want to follow, but also be a leader that makes a positive difference.
Be a Difference Maker!*

Biography: Dr. Timothy S. McWilliams is an award-winning talent development professional and strategic advisor with more than 40 years of civilian, military, government, and ministry leadership experience, 30+ years of experience managing programs and projects, and more than decade managing talent and leader development programs. He obtained a doctorate in Strategic Leadership from Regent University after serving more than 30 years in the U. S. Marine Corps and U. S. Marine Corps reserve. Following September 11, 2001, Tim oversaw major logistics operations, and later field history collection operations, in CONUS, Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan. Previously he was engaged as a marketing and strategic communication professional overseeing corporate advertising and promotion campaigns and advising business leaders. Before launching his own leader development company and *Difference Makers: A Leadership Podcast*, he designed, updated, and managed important DoD civilian leader development programs. Tim is an author, speaker, and the founder and CEO of Timothy S. McWilliams Leadership and Leader Development, LLC, which does business under the *Timotheos Leadership* and *STRATEGIAN Leadership and Communication* brands.