

EPISODE #193 · STUDY GUIDE

Leaders Aren't Born — They're Built

How to Train, Raise Up, and Release Godly Leaders

This guide is designed to walk alongside the podcast episode — whether you're listening solo, leading a small group, or discipling a future leader one-on-one. Read the scriptures aloud, sit in the questions, and don't rush the application sections. Leadership development is a crockpot, not a microwave.

Use it in three ways:

1. Personal devotion — work through it in your own quiet time.
2. Small group / team discussion — use the questions to spark real conversation.
3. Mentorship — work through it with the very person you're raising up.

The Big Idea

“Some people are born leaders... and others just aren't.” That belief is not biblical, not historical, and not practical. Leadership is not a personality type — it is a stewardship, and stewardship can be taught.

“*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*” — 2 Timothy 2:2

Notice the four generations in that one verse: Paul → Timothy → Faithful Men → Others. That's leadership multiplication in action.

Segment 1 — Leaders Are Developed in Scripture

Four biblical pairs show the same pattern: leaders are formed through proximity, service, and time — not born finished.

Moses → Joshua

“*Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua...*” — Exodus 24:13

Joshua watched. Joshua served. Joshua learned. Leadership through proximity.

Elijah → Elisha

Elisha poured water on Elijah's hands (2 Kings 3:11). Servanthood preceded authority — he received a double portion not because he was gifted, but because he was faithful.

Jesus → The Disciples

An impulsive Peter. A doubting Thomas. James and John wanting to call down fire. Hardly natural executives — yet three years of intentional development changed the world.

Paul → Timothy

“Let no man despise thy youth...” — 1 Timothy 4:12 | “God hath not given us the spirit of fear...” — 2 Timothy 1:7

Discussion Questions

1. Which of these four pairs (Moses/Joshua, Elijah/Elisha, Jesus/disciples, Paul/Timothy) do you relate to most right now — and are you in the mentor or the mentee role?
2. “Leadership through proximity” means people learn by being near you. Who has proximity to you right now that could be learning leadership just by watching?

Segment 2 — The Psychology of Leadership Development

Four fears keep capable people from stepping into leadership:

1. Fear of Exposure

“Who am I...?” — Moses, Exodus 3:11

2. Fear of Responsibility

“Be not many masters...” — James 3:1

The higher you go in leadership, the less choices you will have.

3. Fear of Rejection

“The fear of man bringeth a snare...” — Proverbs 29:25

4. Comfort Preference

Dr. Carol Dweck's research on growth mindset shows people avoid roles where failure is possible — but leadership requires risk.

Discussion Questions

1. Of the four fears — exposure, responsibility, rejection, or comfort — which one has held you back the most?
2. How would you gently name that fear in someone you're mentoring, without shaming them for feeling it?

Segment 3 — Are There Shortcuts to Leadership?

No. There are accelerators — but no shortcuts. Jesus trained disciples for three years. Moses trained Joshua for decades.

“Leadership develops daily, not in a day.” — John Maxwell

You can accelerate development through: exposure to decision-making, responsibility with accountability, constructive feedback, crisis-management opportunities, and formal training. But you cannot microwave maturity — developing leaders is more of a crockpot.

“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.” — Luke 16:10

Discussion Questions

1. Where have you tried to rush someone's (or your own) leadership development? What happened?
2. Which of the five accelerators — decision-making, accountability, feedback, crisis opportunities, formal training — are you currently missing in your own growth?

Segment 4 — Who Should You Mentor?

Not everyone wants leadership. Jesus chose twelve from many. David trained mighty men out of the cave of Adullam (1 Samuel 22:1–2; 1 Chronicles 11:15). Look for five markers:

1. Faithfulness — 2 Timothy 2:2, “faithful men”
2. Teachability — Proverbs 9:9, “Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser”
3. Emotional Stability — James 1:8, double-minded = unstable
4. Initiative — they move without constant prompting
5. Integrity — skill can be taught; character must already be present

“In looking for people to hire, you look for integrity, intelligence, and energy...” — Warren Buffett. Remove integrity and the other two will hurt you.

Discussion Questions

1. Of the five markers, which one do you weigh too lightly when choosing who to invest in?
2. Name one person who shows these five markers right now. What's stopping you from investing in them this month?

Segment 5 — Internal Promotion vs. External Recruitment

Raising Leaders From Within

Advantages: cultural alignment, loyalty, institutional knowledge, lower onboarding time, morale boost for the team.

Disadvantages: limited perspective, possible favoritism tension, skill gaps.

Example: Satya Nadella rose within Microsoft and revitalized its culture because he understood it.

Recruiting From Outside

Advantages: fresh perspective, new ideas, specialized expertise, faster change agent.

Disadvantages: culture clash, trust deficit, higher cost, longer integration.

Example: Apple brought Steve Jobs back from outside, and transformation followed.

“To every thing there is a season...” — Ecclesiastes 3:1

Discussion Questions

1. Think of your current team or organization — does this season call for raising someone up from within, or bringing in outside perspective? Why?
2. Have you ever seen internal promotion or external hiring go wrong? What was missing in how it was handled?

Segment 6 — The B.U.I.L.D.E.R.S. Framework

A practical, repeatable framework for developing anyone you're raising up:

Letter	Principle	What It Means	Anchor
B	Believe in Them	Speak future identity into who they can become.	Matthew 16:18
U	Understand Their Strengths	Develop strengths — don't clone personalities.	Romans 12:6
I	Instruct Consistently	Training requires repetition, not a single lesson.	Proverbs 22:6
L	Let Them Lead Small	Delegate authority gradually, starting small.	1 Samuel 17 (David & sheep)
D	Debrief and Develop	Hold after-action reviews; feedback builds awareness.	Modeled by Jesus w/ disciples
E	Empower with Authority	Give real authority, not just responsibility.	Luke 10:19
R	Release Responsibility	Eventually, step back and let them carry it.	John 14:12
S	Support Publicly	Affirm them before others; confidence grows in affirmation.	—

Discussion Questions

1. Which letter of BUILDERS comes most naturally to you? Which one do you consistently skip?
2. “Release Responsibility” (R) is often the hardest step for a leader. What makes it hard for you to let go?

Segment 7 — Building Confidence in a New Leader

Confidence grows through five channels: preparation, repetition, affirmation, controlled risk, and spiritual identity.

“I can do all things through Christ...” — *Philippians 4:13*

Confidence is not ego. It is clarity of calling.

Discussion Questions

1. Which of the five channels — preparation, repetition, affirmation, controlled risk, spiritual identity — is most missing for the person you're developing?
2. When is the last time you affirmed someone's calling out loud, directly to them?

Segment 8 — “What If I Train Them and They Leave?”

The fear is real: you invest, they grow, they leave. But here is the greater fear — what if you don't train them, and they stay? Untrained leaders damage culture.

Jesus trained Judas. Judas left. But the eleven changed the world. Leadership development is obedience to multiplication.

“Be not weary in well doing...” — *Galatians 6:9*

If they leave well-trained, your culture becomes known for excellence — and that attracts more excellence.

Discussion Questions

1. Has fear of someone leaving ever stopped you from fully investing in them? What did that cost you?
2. How would your organization's reputation change if it became known as a place that sends out well-trained leaders?

Application Worksheet — B.U.I.L.D.E.R.S. in Action

Pick one specific person you are currently developing (or want to start developing) and work through each letter below.

Letter	Principle	One Person I Will Apply This To — and How
B	Believe in Them	
U	Understand Their Strengths	

Letter	Principle	One Person I Will Apply This To — and How
I	Instruct Consistently	
L	Let Them Lead Small	
D	Debrief and Develop	
E	Empower with Authority	
R	Release Responsibility	
S	Support Publicly	

Closing Challenge

Ask yourself:

1. Who am I developing?
2. Who developed me?
3. Am I hoarding leadership — or multiplying it?

Healthy organizations multiply leaders. Unhealthy ones centralize power. Remember: leadership is not about being needed — it's about making yourself less needed.

“I have fought a good fight... I have finished my course...” — 2 Timothy 4:7

One day you will pass the baton. The question is — will someone be ready to receive it?

Christian Business Concepts

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