

What Others Are Saying About *8 Steps to Achieve Your Destiny...*

Samuel Chand is a leader's leader. His keen insights and vast leadership exposure have prepared him well for resourcing the kingdom. His natural passion for leadership development is a refined gift he enthusiastically shares with leaders and developing leaders.

—*Dr. John C. Maxwell*
Founder, The INJOY Group and EQUIP

This magnificent book by my friend Dr. Sam Chand will give you a practical understanding of pain, pressure, and your potential. Read this book to have your perspective forever transformed.

—*John Bevere*
Author, founder of Messenger International

Sam Chand's insights will help any leader successfully face the inevitable challenges that all leaders must face. Sam is a brilliant communicator and this book is a must-read for anyone who wants to become a stronger, wiser, more compassionate leader.

—*Jentezen Franklin*
Senior Pastor, Free Chapel
Author of *New York Times* bestseller, *Fasting*

Given the many leaders who are imploding right before our eyes, this is a timely discussion from a capable resource! I pray you'll give Dr. Chand's thoughts deep contemplation, whether you are a leader or you serve one!

—*Bishop T. D. Jakes Sr.*

Best-selling author

Pastor, The Potter's House of Dallas

Dr. Chand has been one of the most valuable mentors in my life and ministry. He has tremendous character, valuable leadership insight, a contagious sense of humor, and a pastor's heart. He has mentored me and made me a much stronger spiritual leader.

—*Craig Groeschel*

Pastor, Lifechurch.tv

Edmond, Oklahoma

8

**STEPS TO ACHIEVE
YOUR DESTINY**

SAMUEL R. CHAND

8

**STEPS TO ACHIEVE
YOUR DESTINY**

**LEAD YOUR LIFE WITH
PURPOSE** |



**WHITAKER
HOUSE**

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8 STEPS TO ACHIEVE YOUR DESTINY:

Lead Your Life with Purpose

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CONTENTS

Introduction: Strategic Shifts	15
1. New People.....	23
2. New Pains.....	49
3. New Places	69
4. New Perspectives	85
5. New Priorities	107
6. New Passions	123
7. New Preparation	139
8. New Possibilities.....	155
About the Author	169

INTRODUCTION: STRATEGIC SHIFTS

As I've worked with leaders of businesses, churches, and non-profits, I've been privileged to watch remarkable leaders who have instituted bold changes and seen remarkable growth. However, I've also observed a few leaders who seemed completely satisfied with the status quo. No matter how much we talked about reaching higher goals and changing more lives, they found excuses to remain stuck in old patterns of thinking, perceiving, and leading. To make progress, leaders have to make strategic shifts in their attitudes and behavior.

TWO CHALLENGES

All leaders face two different challenges: *responding* to change around them and *initiating* change in their organizations. Both of these challenges are shifting circumstances for a leader, and both require the leader to take steps in order to be more effective.

TWO ERRORS

Leaders are prone to two types of errors: *failing to take the necessary steps* and *taking steps without wisdom and patience*.

Some leaders become paralyzed by the threat of change. They may realize change is necessary, but the risk of failure or criticism renders them immobile. Other leaders have the opposite response: they act impulsively—without adequate planning, consultation with others, or consideration of the consequences of their actions.

TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE

All organizations have two kinds of people: *the leader* who is providing vision, strategy, and hope, and *the people* who will implement those plans. Selecting the right implementers is essential!

TWO PERSPECTIVES

All leaders choose between two distinct perspectives: “*The old ways are good enough; we just need to try harder*” and “*We need to take the blinders off, see new possibilities and new strategies, and find the courage to take wise, bold steps forward.*” The way we view an opportunity or a challenge makes all the difference.

The old axiom says, “People instinctively resist change.” That may be true for most people, but not for real leaders. Real leaders *create* change. They look for opportunities, find new ways to get things done, invest in new technologies, and initiate change, because they know that risk has the inherent potential of great reward.

But of course, risk also carries the possibility of failure. I'm not advocating risk for the thrill of it. Instead, I'm recommending careful analysis, good planning, and acquiring the necessary resources so that risks offer the greatest hope of reward—for the leader and every person in the organization.

The kind of strategic steps I recommend in this book aren't reserved for the CEO of the most successful companies, the boards of Wall Street hedge funds, or the pastors of the largest churches in the country. These choices are necessary for all leaders—those in large and small organizations; those with degrees in leadership and those who have learned on the job; and those who have been leading for decades and those who are just starting out. If we keep our eyes open, we'll see possibilities where we only saw limitations in the past.

EIGHT STRATEGIC STEPS

In this book, we will look at eight different but very common choices. The progress of our organizations depends on how we respond to these challenges.

1. New People

The people around us have helped us come this far, and we are deeply grateful for their contribution and love. We may discover, however, that the ones who helped us climb to two hundred in attendance or a million in sales aren't the same people who can take us to five hundred or ten million. They are wonderful people, but at least some of them may have limited capacity for growth and a limited vision for the future.

To climb higher, we need to find a higher caliber of men and women who are stronger in basic leadership skills, better communicators, and outstanding visionaries who see more possibilities. As we identify new people and replace those who have served faithfully, our task is to make this shift with grace, honoring those who have faithfully served and finding a place where they can continue to devote their energies and their hearts. Then, with new people around us, we will be able to climb higher—until we reach the limit of their skills and vision, and we find new people again.

2. New Pains

Leadership always creates pain, because necessary change makes many people feel uncomfortable. As I wrote in *Leadership Pain*, “You’ll grow only to the threshold of your pain.” If your goal is to avoid pain, you’ll avoid challenges, but you’ll also miss out on growth and opportunities for success. If you want to stretch yourself, your leadership team, and your organization toward greatness, you’ll necessarily encounter plenty of painful choices and reactions. Get used to it. Welcome it, because it’s your best teacher. And become a willing and eager student of pain’s lessons.

3. New Places

We often talk about “where our organization needs to go.” The destination—defined by our vision, mission, and goals—is a “place” where we want to go, just like Yellowstone National Park is a place we may want to go on vacation. To get to our

organization's desired future, we need to evaluate our vehicle: our strategies, staff, and structures. We keep what will take us farther and we replace the worn or unused parts that slow us down. When we chart a new path to an unknown area of business or ministry, we can expect some thrills, some surprises, and some setbacks. That's the nature of adventures! To get where we want to go, we need plenty of courage, which is our fuel for the journey.

4. New Perspectives

Leaders are learners. We stop growing (and we stop being effective leaders) when we stop searching for new ways to see reality around us. The best leaders are humble enough to know what they don't know, and they find people to fill the void in their thinking. They read, they listen, and they find a mentor who can help them take the next step. When they initiate change, these leaders discover that the going gets rough, the people around them can no longer keep up, and the temptation to go back to when things were easier may seem enticing. New perspectives inevitably produce a fair share of difficulties. Failure and chaos are part of life when we try new ways of thinking about life and leadership. The best leaders get excited about learning and innovation, and they welcome a good push to help them move forward.

5. New Priorities

Leaders realize that everything isn't of equal importance, but those who are in the middle of instituting change realize

they have to be ruthless to restructure their priorities. Old ways may have worked very well for a simpler and more limited vision, but reaching greater heights requires a new plan that will demand an investment of time, people, and other resources. Good leaders realize they don't only need a new vision of the future, they also need to define the steps to reach their new goals, including a system to monitor their organization's progress. New priorities, then, must be both inspiring and practical.

6. New Passions

In different seasons of their careers, leaders can become exhausted from overwork, or perhaps bored from work that has become too familiar and comfortable. Also, the seasons of life change as we age, and we may need to initiate changes in order to find new sources of strength and joy. Don't let the familiar become a tomb! If life has become exhausting or boring, make a change. Discover (or rediscover) energy and excitement in your most important relationships and in your work. Take a vacation (and turn your cell phone off most of every day), take up a new hobby, write a book, or get a degree in a field that interests you. Whatever it takes, be a person with a zest for life!

7. New preparations

When we make strategic shifts so we can reach new places and reach higher than ever before, our old daily habits will no longer be adequate. We need to take stock in how we prepare our bodies, our minds, and our hearts; how we sharpen our skills; and how we equip and motivate the key people around

us. Some leaders are so gifted they get by without any preparation, but that only works to a certain point. To reach higher and do more, we all need to acquire new skills and develop better habits of preparation.

8. New Possibilities

Insecure leaders feel threatened by challenges. They react defensively, trying to control people and situations to avoid failure. Secure, humble, wise leaders are realistic about the problems they face, but they remain full of hope. They develop a genuine joy as they face new possibilities. In fact, they have an essential quality of great leadership: “change readiness,” the willingness to enthusiastically embrace risks and opportunities. Instead of withdrawing from challenges, they find creative ways to respond, always taking people with them on the journey. And these leaders realize the incredible resource of modern technology to communicate with this generation.

LOOKING FORWARD

My friend, you’ve been accomplishing a lot, but do you realize that you can do so much more? I know you are eager to make those strategic shifts and reach those greater heights. How do I know? Because you’re reading this book!

As I’ve consulted with pastors and business leaders, I’ve seen them make changes that have propelled them to new levels of effectiveness. They’ve paid a price, but they would all say, “It’s been well worth it!”

As a leader, your biggest challenge isn't money, staff members, building plans, or marketing strategies. The most important challenge you face isn't "out there," it's "in here"—in your perceptions and attitudes. As you read these eight chapters and gain insights about the roadblocks you can overcome, you'll find new ways to respond to the situations and people around you. You'll implement strategic shifts and you'll become more effective. That's what leadership is all about—making sense of what's happening in your environment and making changes to move your organization forward. As you learn and grow, you'll be able to help others learn and grow, too. You'll climb higher toward your destiny and you'll prepare the leaders around you to face the challenges in their journeys.

Don't settle for the status quo. Respond with wisdom and courage to the shifts in our culture, and initiate plenty of your own shifts to create an atmosphere of creativity, hope, and excitement in your organization.

NEW PEOPLE

“My main job was developing talent. I was a gardener providing water and other nourishment to our top 750 people. Of course, I had to pull out some weeds, too.”¹

—Jack Welch

Paul was sweating. His largest client had just called, asking for earlier completion of an important project. Paul had been up nearly all night, scrambling for ways to meet his regular project deadlines. Despite the success of his small software company, he found it increasingly difficult to retain responsible employees. While there was no shortage of qualified programmers, their inability to meet deadlines or to even show up for work had forced him to let a number of them go. His most talented people were frequently lured away by offers from larger companies. Staring at the ringing phone, Paul wondered if he could afford to hire someone to deal with these human resource challenges.

1. Jack Welch quoted by Jeffrey E. Garten, “Jack Welch: A Role Model for Today’s CEO?” *Bloomberg Business*, September 9, 2001, <http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/stories/2001-09-09/jack-welch-a-role-model-for-todays-ceo>.

Leadership is filled with “people issues.” No leader is immune to them; they come with the territory. Like Paul, maybe you find yourself in need of some new people in your life. Perhaps you’re wondering why you’re not getting the support you need from people who have always been helpful in the past. Maybe you wish you could find someone to simply validate the challenges that you’re dealing with, or provide sage advice from their own experience.

**THE PEOPLE WHO GOT YOU
TO WHERE YOU ARE NOW
MAY NOT BE THE ONES WHO
WILL TAKE YOU WHERE YOU
NEED TO GO.**

All leaders need new people in their lives. The people who got you to where you are now may not be the ones who will take you where you need to go. The chief financial officer (CFO) who took you from

one million to five million may not be the one who takes you from five million to fifty million. As a leader, you have to accept the fact that your CFO has his own thresholds, his own limitations, and his own issues to work through. You have to accept that his perspective may be different than yours.

PEOPLE YOU WILL ENCOUNTER

There are many types of people leaders will work with and encounter. As you climb your career ladder, you’ll encounter people who are where you were, where you are, and where you will/want to be.

In particular, there are eight different kinds of people, and many of the difficulties you'll encounter will come from not knowing how to deal with the issues and situations raised

by these different groups of people. When you don't know how to engage and disengage with people, there will be pain. So let's take a closer look at these groups. Knowing about them can help you to deal with them appropriately. There are...

**WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW
HOW TO ENGAGE AND
DISENGAGE WITH PEOPLE,
THERE WILL BE PAIN.**

1. Positive and negative people
2. People you've outgrown
3. People who are tied to yesterday's solutions
4. "That's not my job" people
5. People who cannot move on
6. People who give you new perspective
7. People you can be transparent with
8. People who celebrate your success

Positive and Negative People

First, you'll encounter both positive and negative people. It's easy to recognize positive people; they are the ones who add value to your life. As you move up your ladder, it's important to have positive people around you. We all were created with

a built-in need for approval, and we want to be around people who add value by agreeing or disagreeing with us. Understand that agreement is not always positive and disagreement is not always negative; people can disagree with us and still add value.

But there are some people who will not agree with us at all. What can you do about these people? What strategy can you use with them? I once heard a very insightful remark from the former president of Kenya. During our discussion, he said, "To appease everybody is to invite trouble."

When a company or an organization grows, you will find yourself appeasing fewer and fewer people. Appeasement involves finding the middle of the road, or compromising. The more you travel in the middle of the road, the more mediocrity you're going to produce. Excellence is found on the edges, never in the middle. Saying yes to one group or person and no to another invites challenges on both sides.

**EXCELLENCE IS FOUND
ON THE EDGES, NEVER
IN THE MIDDLE.**

Many times, when a negative person gives you his opinion, he will expect you to heed his advice. That's why it's important to be around people who are willing to give you input, whether in agreement or disagreement with you, without a demanding spirit. These are the positive people, the ones who will add value to your life and help you to get where you want to go.

People You've Outgrown

Second, you also must deal with people you've outgrown. Growing is necessary; it's what keeps you moving. There will be times when you outdistance the folks who started the journey with you. Maybe there's someone who was an integral part of your organization but who just hasn't grown with you. People have to understand that if they don't grow, they've got to go.

The same thing can happen in a church. Perhaps you begin with twenty-five, thirty, or even one hundred people in your congregation.

As you add many more people and expand to two or more services, you might find that the elders, board members, or other leaders who accompany you are not the same ones who will take you where you need to go. As a leader, you have to accept those facts.

**PEOPLE HAVE TO
UNDERSTAND THAT IF
THEY DON'T GROW,
THEY'VE GOT TO GO.**

People Who Are Tied to Yesterday's Solutions

People who are tied to yesterday's solutions are another concern. Dealing with the old guard is an issue that every leader has to wrestle with. In the early stages of an organization business, or church, leaders tend to throw people into positions. Perhaps when you began your church, you just wanted someone to play the keyboard. You weren't concerned about the person's musical pedigree. If he could read music and make a pretty

sound, he was capable of leading worship. If you and your son started a landscaping business, for instance, you would not be too considered about hiring people with vast experience. You would just be looking for someone who was breathing and who could come to work and push a lawn mower. So maybe you would hire your son's friend, who is also your neighbor.

**DEALING WITH THE OLD
GUARD IS AN ISSUE THAT
EVERY LEADER HAS TO
WRESTLE WITH.**

Then, after a certain amount of growth, leaders begin refining their approach and looking for expertise. This is when they realize that some people aren't working out. Maybe the people you've

chosen don't understand what you want, don't want to learn contemporary worship songs, or wonder what's wrong with the way they've always done things. What do you do with them? Yesterday's solutions have become today's problems.

And because the young man you hired to push the lawn mower is your son's friend, your son may not like it when you let him go. Your neighbor may not like it, either. People will object. This is why issues that arise over yesterday's solutions are often complicated.

"That's Not My Job" People

Then there are the "that's not my job" people. When you hire people, they're typically tied to job descriptions. At higher levels, you are less concerned with job descriptions than you are with

the presence of three essential characteristics: competency, character, and chemistry.

Competency is about the skills, the training, and the experience required to get the job done. Character is about integrity. What do people do when nobody is watching him or her? Leaders want people with integrity, whom they can trust. Last, there is chemistry, which, when missing, can really cause issues. It asks, “Does this person fit in?” “Can he or she get along with other people?” Carly Fiorina was the first outsider to lead Hewlett-Packard. When she left, many people attributed her departure to her chemistry with the company. She just didn’t fit in with the culture of HP.

Southwest Airlines is a prime example of the great results you can achieve when employees have the right blend of competency, character, and chemistry. A man concerned about his elderly mother’s ability to change flights in Tulsa called the Southwest Airlines ticket counter in Dallas, from where she would depart. The ticket agent personally volunteered to drive the woman to the airport, to fly with her from Dallas to Tulsa after his shift, and to ensure that she made the connection.

You want people like that—people who aren’t restricted by the circumstances under which they were hired.

YESTERDAY’S SOLUTIONS HAVE BECOME TODAY’S PROBLEMS.

**YOU WANT PEOPLE WHO TAKE
OWNERSHIP OF A SITUATION
INSTEAD OF SAYING, “THAT’S
NOT MY JOB.”**

You want people who take ownership of a situation instead of saying, “That’s not my job.”

People Who Cannot Move On

You also have to cope with people who cannot move on. A leader is always dynamic, while organizations tend to be static. Sometimes, the vision and the movement of a leader do not mirror the vision and movement of the organization. We call that tension a lack of organizational congruence or alignment.

**...YOU HAVE TO
FIGURE OUT WHO IS
GOING TO TAKE THE
JOURNEY WITH YOU
AND WHO IS NOT.**

Carly Fiorina’s vision of merging HP and Compaq caused a great deal of organizational tension. She had to battle employees, shareholders, and even board members. Her vision was out of sync with the organization.

When you have moved on and others have not, you have to figure out who is going to take the journey with you and who is not. You have to think about where you’re going and who can help you get there.

People Who Give You New Perspective

It’s also important that you find people who can give you new perspective. The most productive time of a new employee in any organization—secular or religious—is within the first three months. After that, they do not add the same value. In the first three months, they give you perspective by questioning the way you do things. They might say, “Didn’t I just fill out a

form that asked me for this same information?" New employees find redundancies and point out ineffectiveness. They find more effective ways of doing things, and they bring new ideas with them. After three months, they know that survival involves falling in step, so their DNA becomes that of the organization.

When I was president of a college, I always had conversations with new employees and their supervisors. I'd bring them together on the first day and encourage the new person to ask questions, and tell the supervisor not to be threatened by the questions. I'd tell them that those questions would help us to reconfigure and reinvent ourselves, and to make improvements. New people bring a unique perspective because they see things at another level. Oftentimes, you'll be able to recognize these change agents immediately by the fresh perspective they offer your organization/church/etc.

**NEW PEOPLE BRING A
UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE
BECAUSE THEY
SEE THINGS AT
ANOTHER LEVEL.**

People You Can Be Transparent With

It's equally important to have people you can be transparent with. As you rise in leadership, it becomes increasingly difficult to find people you can talk to about your struggles. Since these are not issues you can talk about with just anybody, you need a few people in your life whom you can talk to, be transparent with, reveal your fears to, and count on to listen to your concerns. Chances are that the people you had conversations

with two years ago may not be the same people you'll be having conversations with in years to come.

Why is it so difficult to find people to talk to? Because the stakes are higher. When your landscaping company consisted of just two men and a truck, you could talk about anything while driving down the road. But when you have ten trucks and one hundred employees, you're not going to talk to just anyone about the equipment you're going to buy, the plans you have to leverage your business, or whom you're going to let go.

There are fewer people who understand the reality of your position. You can find a lot of people to confide in when you're at the two-men-and-a-truck level but fewer when the organization expands. It really can be lonely at the top—but it doesn't have to be.

People Who Celebrate Your Success

YOU WANT PEOPLE WHO WILL HELP YOU CELEBRATE YOUR JOURNEY.

You should also find people who celebrate your successes. The Scriptures tell us to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. (See Romans 12:15.) Unfortunately, people find it easier to weep with those who weep than to rejoice with those who rejoice.

Let's say that you and your friend start organizations at the same time; your organization takes off, but his is struggling. As

a result, it may be very difficult for him to celebrate and rejoice with you.

You want people who will say, “Yeah, man! It’s great that you’re doing well!” You want people who can be the wind beneath your wings, who can cheer you along, who won’t get jealous or envious, who won’t disengage from you because you’re doing well. You want people who will help you celebrate your journey.

PEOPLE PRINCIPLES

Every leader is tempted to ignore or dismiss one particular type of person. We dream about how much easier life would be without so-and-so, or how much better things would be if we could clone someone who is full of new ideas and is always encouraging.

But the fact is, we need different types of people in our lives. Rather than avoiding complicated people, leaders must focus on them. Jack Welch understood the importance of our dealings with people, and it helped him to transform stodgy General Electric into a highly competitive, multibillion-dollar global enterprise. Jack Welch, who has been called one of the greatest corporate leaders of this century, said he spent 50 percent of his time on people issues. That’s taking your people seriously!

Businessweek reported that Welch told his senior managers that they should be proud of everyone that reported to them. If they weren’t proud of their people, they weren’t setting

themselves up to win. And Welch established the example for his leaders to follow. He sent handwritten notes to production workers. He apologized to one executive's wife for keeping him tied up with an important presentation. He commended one of his executives who turned down a promotion that would have required his teenage daughter to transfer schools. In many companies, turning down a promotion is what's called a "career-limiting" move. But Jack Welch called this manager up and praised him for keeping his priorities straight.²

**...THE WAY AN
ORGANIZATION
GROWS IS BY
GROWING ITS PEOPLE.**

Jack Welch knew that the way an organization grows is by growing its people. Too many leaders think that the best way to expand a company is to develop a leading-edge product or a service that blows all competition away. We try to convince ourselves that the

best way to grow a congregation is to have appealing programs, inspiring services, and a magnificent building. But that's not going to produce long-term growth. To grow your church or organization, grow your leaders in number and in depth.

Achieving growth comes from keeping these three "people principles":

- ♦ **People Principle #1:** To grow your organization, grow your people. To grow as a leader, grow other leaders.

2. John A. Byrne, "How Jack Welch Runs GE: A Close-up Look at How America's #1 Manager Runs GE," *BusinessWeek*, June 8, 1998.

- ✦ People Principle #2: Surround yourself with people who challenge you to grow.
- ✦ People Principle #3: Focus on your organization's context, not its packaging.

People Principle #1: To grow your organization, grow your people. To grow as a leader, grow other leaders.

“Growing” people is a very holistic process. It involves helping them develop competency, character, and chemistry.

To help them developing competency, send them to classes, seminars, and workshops that help them to develop their skill, so they become a better widget maker, computer person, or musician. Whatever their talent, make sure they cultivate it!

To develop character, pay attention to people's decisions and make sure they are ethical. Ensure that they err on the side of losing business rather than engaging in shady business.

**TO GROW YOUR CHURCH
OR ORGANIZATION,
GROW YOUR LEADERS IN
NUMBER AND IN DEPTH.**

To develop chemistry, help them to strengthen people skills, leadership skills, and management skills. Typically, people don't leave organizations because of competency issues. They leave because they don't fit in with the culture, because they either don't know how or don't want to develop chemistry with the organization. Most people I've had to let go fall into this category.

Growing people must be a holistic effort. Many companies have on-site fitness facilities and wellness benefits, but imagine if your organization sponsored a marriage retreat for employees. If an employee's marriage is strong, won't he be more productive? If an employee isn't distracted by a divorce, won't she give the job her full attention? Isn't it better if your employee doesn't have to work a second job to make ends meet? Growing people means caring for the many facets of their well-being. After all, you want the whole person coming to work every day.

People Principle #2: Surround yourself with people who challenge you to grow.

Everyone is familiar with the undesirable yes-man. Concerned only with protecting his status and position, he never disagrees with his leaders. Have you ever considered what your life would be like if you were surrounded by yes-men?

If we surround ourselves with people who are just like us, our weaknesses will never be challenged. We must complement our weaknesses within the organization. John Maxwell says, "Staff your weaknesses." Find out where you're weak, and hire people with strengths in those areas. Most pastors are not good with finances. We went to school to study theology, not financial management. As a result, we don't know how to read an audit or answer an accountant's questions. If that's you, stop pretending and hire someone with that competency!

When you need to hire, look for someone who is better than you. If you want to stay where you are and make lateral moves,

hire people just like you. People who are just like you will never challenge you to grow. When Scripture talks about iron sharpening iron (see Proverbs 27:17), it's talking about people who will sharpen, or challenge, your thinking. You should surround yourself with people who think up new ideas and challenge the status quo. And give them permission to speak honestly, so that you grow. You don't have to agree about everything. You might walk away saying, "Well, we didn't agree, but it sure gave me something to think about."

You have to be secure enough to let someone else fill in where you are weak. Don't pretend that you have to do everything yourself. Insecure people will hire people who lack competency, character, and chemistry. Secure leaders will hire people who excel in these attributes, who may be even better than they are. I can walk into any church or organization and determine how secure the leader is by observing the people. If the leader has gathered eagles around him, I know he's an eagle. If he's gathered turkeys around him, I don't care how much he says he's an eagle, he's just a turkey.

It is better to be alone than in the wrong company.

Tell me who your best friends are, and I will tell you who you are. If you run with wolves, you will learn how to howl. But if you associate with eagles, you will learn how to soar to great heights. "*A mirror reflects a man's face, but what he is really like is shown by the kind of friends he chooses*" (Proverbs 27:19 TLB). The simple but true fact of life is that you become like those whom you closely associate with—for the good and the bad.

The less you associate with some people, the more your life will improve. When you tolerate mediocrity in others, you will become mediocre. An important attribute in successful people is their impatience with negative thinking and negative-acting people. As you grow, your associates will change. Some of your friends will not want you to move on; they will want you to stay where they are. Friends who don't help you climb will make you crawl. Your friends will either stretch your vision or choke your dream. Those who don't increase you will eventually decrease you.

Here are some helpful tips to avoid these pitfalls:

- ✦ Never receive counsel from unproductive people.
- ✦ Never discuss your problems with a person incapable of contributing to the solution. Not everyone has a right to speak into your life. You are certain to get the worst of the bargain when you exchange ideas with the wrong person. Often, unsuccessful people are always first to tell you how to do things.
- ✦ Don't follow anyone who's not going anywhere. With some people you spend an evening; with others you invest it.
- ✦ Be careful where you stop to inquire for directions along the road of life.

“Wise is the person who fortifies his life
with the right friendships.”

—Anonymous

People Principle #3: Focus on your organization's context, not its packaging.

Writer and business expert Tom Peters says that your company will never experience a talent shortage as long as it's a great place to work. A growing organization attracts qualified people, so it doesn't have to hire people with cold resumes. Growing organizations and churches are filled with people who want to be a part of them.

It's not the stock options, fringe benefits, or salary that attract people. It's not the product or service, either. What attracts people is becoming part of an organization that's going somewhere, that's doing something, that's changing the world.

Apple cofounder Steve Jobs tried to convince John Sculley to leave his job as senior vice president of PepsiCo to become the CEO of Apple. Sculley wasn't particularly interested in leaving a secure position at Pepsi to help run this brand-new com-

pany. Jobs changed that by asking him, "Do you want to spend the rest of your life selling sugared water or do you want a chance to change the world?" Being part of a company that was doing something important is what attracted John Sculley to Apple.

**WHAT ATTRACTS PEOPLE
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Herb Kelleher, cofounder and former chairman of Southwest Airlines, said that the company probably has twenty-five applicants for every open job.³ That's not because the company has been consistently profitable; it's because people want to be connected to a company that makes them feel fulfilled in their work.

**PEOPLE WANT TO
BE CONNECTED TO
ORGANIZATIONS THAT VALUE
THEM, GIVE THEM IMPORTANT
WORK TO DO, AND TREAT
THEM WITH RESPECT.**

In addition, Ritz Carlton's employees all are empowered to make decisions to ensure that guests are satisfied. When you talk to them about a problem, they don't pass the buck to the manager. Instead, they immediately take ownership of the prob-

lem and deal with it, then follow up afterward. That attitude is apparent in their credo, "We are ladies and gentlemen serving ladies and gentlemen."

It's about value, respect, and significance. Why do some companies in Silicon Valley have no trouble attracting people in spite of that area's talent shortage? It's because people want to be connected to organizations that value them, give them important work to do, and treat them with respect.

3. Mark Morrison, "Herb Kelleher on the Record, Part 2," *BusinessWeek*, December 23, 2003.

TAKING APPROPRIATE ACTION

As a leader, you need many different kinds of people around you, and often, problems arise when you're unsure of how to engage and disengage with them. I've found it helpful to determine whom I can help grow as a leader, who can grow alongside me, and who can help me develop my own leadership potential.

And since all people are different, we engage each of them differently. We either (1) reach down to those below us, whom we can assist; (2) reach out to those around us, who are where we are presently; or (3) reach up to those above us, who are where we want to be.

First, leaders are people who share what they've learned with others. They use their own growth to help others to grow, and they purposefully mentor others. When we grow others, we also grow ourselves.

Furthermore, a leader does three things: They know, they grow, and they show. Knowing involves getting information. By using the information you acquire, you grow and develop yourself. But that alone doesn't make you a leader—you have to show someone else what you know.

**WHEN WE GROW OTHERS,
WE ALSO GROW OURSELVES.**

Giving away what you've learned sounds odd. Why would you share your hard-earned secrets with someone else? Because the best use of your power is empowering others. You never lose

by giving away power. When you empower someone else, you've made a friend for life.

**YOU NEVER LOSE BY
GIVING AWAY POWER.
WHEN YOU EMPOWER
SOMEONE ELSE, YOU'VE
MADE A FRIEND FOR LIFE.**

In addition, we reach out to those around us, who are where we are presently. If both your company and your friend's company have one hundred trucks, the two of you can commiserate about your troubles and rejoice in

your successes. During this conversation, you both are learning from each other's experience. You may not be adding a lot of value to each other, but you're creating cohesiveness, camaraderie, and collegiality by being transparent with each other.

Last, we reach up to those above us, who are where we want to be. It's important that we also get their assistance. Put yourself in places to be recognized, and let these people know that you'd like to learn from their knowledge and experience.

**DISENGAGING FROM
PEOPLE IS DIFFICULT—
IT'S PAINFUL AND MESSY.**

This last category can be somewhat painful. That's because you may have to disengage with people who have brought you where you are in order to engage with people

who can take you forward. If you've been spending time with a new group of people, you won't have time to devote to the people you used to see. If your company is growing, you will

be busy engaging with people running other growing companies. You won't have to spend with the people who run small companies.

Disengaging from people is difficult—it's painful and messy. It's painful because you may really care about these people and do not want to disengage from them. But unless

you disengage, you won't have time to engage with new people. It's also painful to realize that we may never see these two different groups of people together because their worlds and realities are so different. And people you're disengaging from will not always be able to understand why. It's painful all the way around. But, remember, unless you are willing to endure these pains, your own growth as a leader will be limited. Leaders grow only to the threshold of their pain.

**LEADERS GROW ONLY
TO THE THRESHOLD OF
THEIR PAIN.**

TEACHING POINTS

1. All leaders need new people in their lives. The people who get us where we are may not be the ones who will take us where we need to go.
2. Many difficulties we encounter come from not knowing how to deal with issues and situations raised by different types of people.
3. We'll encounter people who agree and disagree with us. Agreement is not always positive, and

disagreement is not always negative. People can disagree with us and still add value to our church or organization.

4. We'll have to deal with people we've outgrown or outpaced.
5. People who are tied to yesterday's solutions can become today's problems.
6. There are also people who will stay only within the boundaries of their job description and will not take ownership of situations.
7. A leader must deal with static people and static organizations. When they're not moving in sync, there is a lack of organizational congruence.
8. During their first ninety days of work, new workers can often offer us new perspectives and shed light on redundancies and ineffectiveness.
9. As we rise in leadership, there will be few people who understand the reality of our position. So it's important to find people we can be transparent with about our struggles and concerns.
10. We should also surround ourselves with people who can celebrate our successes without being jealous or envious.

11. We need different types of people in our lives. As we focus on growing people, our organization will experience growth. Areas of growth include competency, character, and chemistry.
12. We must surround ourselves with people who will challenge us. If we hire only people like us, we will never complement our weaknesses within the organization.
13. As long as our organization shows workers that they are valued by giving them important work to do and treating them with respect, we'll never experience a talent shortage.
14. When interacting with people, we should:
 - a. Reach down to those who are where we used to be.
 - b. Reach out to peers who are where we are presently.
 - c. Reach up to those who are where we'd like to be.
15. Unless we're willing to engage with new people and disengage with others, our own leadership growth will be limited.



