Hello, and welcome to Week 40 of The Jim Rohn One-Year Success Plan. We hope you’re having a great week and are ready for this week’s edition.

This month Jim and Chris tackle the topic of Leadership. Although there are many definitions and facets to leadership, one of the most practical and clear realities of leadership is that it is all about the ability to influence. And since everything we do and say has the potential to influence others, we all are in the position of leadership.

For example, even if you feel you are the “low man on the totem pole” in your office (or job), you still have the opportunity to influence others—through your attitude, your example, your work ethic, your decisions, your philosophy, and everything you do. This would also apply to our children at school. And for those in a literal position of leadership, you are the rudder of the ship—as you go, so goes the ship.

Because leadership is obviously a very important part of our daily lives and relationships, we should be telling our kids, “You are a leader”; telling our staff members, “You are a leader”; and telling ourselves, “I’m a leader.” And soon, the very truth of this powerful statement will grow more each day, as we internalize it and allow it to influence us and those around us.

Make it a great week!

Kyle Wilson

“Leadership is a matter of having people look at you and gain confidence, seeing how you react. If you’re in control, they’re in control.”

—Tom Landry
Hi, Jim Rohn here. I love to talk about leadership, because when we talk about personal development, we are looking internally at what we do for ourselves. But when we talk about leadership, we are transferring those concepts outward so that we begin to affect others around us and improve their lives as well.

One brief note before we begin. Many times, people mistakenly define leaders as people who hold high-profile positions, such as the president of the United States or the leader of a large social movement. But leadership is so much more than that. Anyone who has a role in shaping the lives of others needs to develop leadership skills, whether it is a parent or a small-business owner, or the CEO of a large multinational corporation. And, surprisingly, most leadership principles are highly transferable between a broad cross-section of leadership situations.

So, plant this thought in your mind: You are a leader, and you can grow in your leadership position so that you can effectively lead the group around you—no matter what size it is!

This is what we are covering on the topic of Leadership this month:

1. **The Foundational Principles of Leadership and Developing a Powerful Vision.** In today’s lesson, we will cover the basic foundational elements that are central to becoming a person with tremendous leadership skills and abilities. We will also discuss secrets to having a powerful and compelling vision that helps you attract others.

2. **Character: The Core of Leadership and Leadership Mistakes to Avoid.** Next week, we will be looking at what I believe is the core element of what it means to be a leader: the issue of character. We will look at what it means to be a person of character who can lead others forward, and how character is essential to successfully lead others. We will also look at some typical leadership mistakes people make that hinder their ability to lead and move their organizations forward, and how you can avoid making those same mistakes.

3. **Skills Needed for Effective Leadership and Developing Other Leaders in Your Organization.** In two weeks, we will turn our eyes away from the character traits of leaders and look more at the basic skills that effective leaders demonstrate. We will also be looking at some strategic ways to develop other leaders around you so you can ensure a new generation of leaders.

4. **Becoming the Best Leader You Can Be—Taking Care of Yourself as the Leader and Motivating Those Who Follow You—In Good Times and Tough Times.** In the last week of this month, we will take a closer look at making sure that you take care of yourself. In this day and age, it is even more important for the leader to closely guard their own growth and development. We will also look at how to motivate others to follow you.

“Managers have the ability to get results; leaders have a vision of the future.”

—Brian Tracy
THE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPING A POWERFUL VISION

Let’s look at some foundational principles of leadership:

Leadership is the challenge of being above average. If you want to be a leader, you cannot be part of the average. You must not be ordinary, but extraordinary. “Getting by” is not an option, but excelling is mandatory. If you truly desire to lead others, you must first decide for yourself that you will do what it takes in your own life to set yourself apart from the rest, in your character, your skills, your passion and your vision. Those who lead others must be further ahead of those they lead.

Leadership is driven by character. I will talk more about what character is next week, but overall, character centers on who you are, not just what you do. Yes, skills are important to a leader’s success, but the core is character. It is about the integrity, honesty, honor and passion that come from deep within. Some may argue that we have had many leaders who had little or no character, and my response would be, “But not for long.” People eventually find out about poor character traits, and if they have any say in it, they choose a different leader. People will not follow men and women who cannot be trusted. More on this next week.

Leadership requires vision—a long-range, organizational vision that takes the whole scope of the group into mind. That is what sets the leader apart. Most people think about tasks that need to be performed day to day, sometimes even stretching that out to monthly or quarterly goals. Leaders think about the big picture—a 30,000-foot view of the organization. For example, a 7-year-old child will think of doing their second-grade homework for the week, while Mom and Dad think about paying for that child’s college education. Or a store employee will think about placing an order to restock for the week, but the store owner thinks about seasonal changes in inventory and how to take the business to the next level. In other words, most people think about taking care of what the organization is, while leaders dream of what the organization can become. A great vision should be big, clear, compelling, understandable and achievable.

Leadership is about mastering the art of influence. When it comes right down to it, leadership is the ability to convince others to follow. Whether you lead a large group or a small one, or even if you lead just one person, you’re a leader if you can influence that person or persons to follow when you lead. Influence is an art. You do not just pick up a book, read it and then decide you will influence. No, influence is something that you develop over time. You improve your character and increase your skills. You learn to communicate better. You learn how to take risks. And as you do, your influence begins to grow in two ways: First, you are able to have a greater influence over those who already follow you. Second, you are able to influence more people. Your influence grows in depth and breadth.

Leaders are initiators. Leaders are people who see where the group needs to go and then do what it takes to initiate the movement toward that destination. Leaders do not sit around and wait for others to make the first move (if they did, they would be following). The key is knowing where you want to go, and then how to get there. Once you know this, it is only a matter of taking the risk to step out and lead. If you have mastered the art of influence, then others will follow your initial step.

Leadership requires highly skilled communication. We must have great interpersonal communication skills so that we can develop relationships with our “inner circle.” We must learn to communicate clearly so that everyone can understand our vision. And we must know how to communicate passionately so that people will see that passion and respond accordingly.

Next, Chris will talk to you about developing a powerful vision.

Until next week, let’s do something remarkable!

Jim Rohn
Hi there, Chris Widener here. This week, I want to talk with you about developing a powerful vision.

As I discuss this concept, I would like to reiterate a point Jim made: Leadership is essentially influence, and the leader’s vision is tied to the message used to influence. So the key is to make the vision powerful enough to influence and persuade others to follow. What, then, are the key ways to make sure that your vision is powerful and persuasive? What are the core elements of a powerful vision? One of the best answers to this is found in the writings of a man who lived a long time ago.

My basic points for this article are found in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*. I call these points “Three Legs of Persuasion and Influence.” Together, they enable us to fully persuade people. They are the core elements of a powerful vision. Leave out any of the three legs, and it is like trying to sit on a three-legged stool that is missing one leg!

What are the three legs as Aristotle defined them? They are:

1. **Logos** (logic)
2. **Pathos** (passion)
3. **Ethos** (ethics)

Let’s start with the two that are most prevalent, logic and passion, and end with what I consider to be the most important, ethics (Jim will cover this extensively next week).

In order to master the art of persuasion and develop a powerful vision, you must have:

1. **Logic.** Your vision must make sense to the person following you (or the one you are trying to persuade to follow you!). How is this done?
   - **Vision.** Do you have a vision of where you want to go? Do you have a destination in mind? If you want people to follow you, you need to have a vision, a result that you are targeting.
   - **Clarity.** Is the vision clear? Can it be articulated clearly? Is it simple enough to grasp? Does the message make sense?
   - **Communication.** Can you communicate your vision so that it is understandable and compelling? Do you communicate it regularly so that the logic of it sinks in?
   - **Strategy.** The strategy for getting to your destination must make sense to your followers. Is it logical for them to follow you on the journey of your vision for your organization? A well-thought-out strategy for realizing vision is a must.

2. **Passion.** People underestimate the principle of passion. Today, more than ever, this element of being passionate about your vision is paramount to the idea of persuasion.

   As we leave the modern era and move into what sociologists are calling the “postmodern” era, people are going to be persuaded less by logic and reason than they are by passion. We live in a video age that uses images and music to move people more than sense and reason. For example, think about how basketball shoes are sold today. The ads don’t say, “These shoes are made from the finest rubber and leather and will sustain the shock of X amount of pounds of pressure, etc.” No, today shoes are sold by showing basketball players dribbling the ball to a methodical beat. Image. Passion.

   So, do we throw out logic? Certainly not, but we understand that the passion we demonstrate is extremely important, probably more so than logic, and will increasingly become more important in the years to come.
Are you passionate about your vision? Does that come through when you speak about it? Does it come through in the materials that you distribute to support your vision?

People want to know that you are passionate about your vision. If you aren’t passionate about it, then why should they be? Your vision must be passionately compelling. After all, you are asking them to put themselves on the line, to give it all to get the group to the vision. It takes a passionate person to move a group toward a vision. And the bigger the vision, the more passion you need to get there!

3. **Ethics.** This is what I believe to be the most important aspect of these three legs of persuasion. Ethics. Integrity. Character. However you want to say it, people look at you and constantly judge your character.

You may have tremendous skills. You may have all the logic in the world and passion to fill a sports arena, but if your followers see a crack in your character, they will run for the hills. Now, don’t get me wrong, I am not talking about mistakes. Followers will allow for mistakes. But they will not allow for poor character.

I know what you must be thinking: *Wait a minute. We have all sorts of leaders with poor character—just look at the politicians!* A few thoughts on that very good point:

Many of the people we think have poor character have many others who think their character is fine (and in a politician’s case, they just need 51 percent), or at least sufficient. So, for some, the question of ethics has been answered, just differently than we would have answered it. For example, polls show that most people think politicians are generally unethical and corrupt. But when polled on their own representative, they say that person is just fine, thank you very much.

Second, we have seen very talented leaders eventually undone by their lack of character, or at least thwarted in their goals of leadership. Let’s take Bill Clinton for example (and I only pick him because he was recent. Believe me, we could pick examples from both sides of the aisle). What do we know about him? What would most people agree upon?

For one, he is smart, a Rhodes Scholar. For another, he is talented. Still, more, he is passionate and driven. He is winsome and gregarious. We also know that he had a few “character problems.”
You may say, “But he was reelected.” True, but he didn’t accomplish what he wanted during his second term because he was answering character questions so much. And beyond that, many people who were once big supporters of his realized that they could support someone else who would provide leadership without the sideshow, and they abandoned him in droves by the end of his final term.

To his major detractors, Bill Clinton is an example of a person who lacked the character to lead. To his supporters, he has become a caricature of lost opportunity because of the issues of character. Now, I do not intend to turn this article into a discussion of politics, but I use Clinton as an example of how people who are both opposed as well as sympathetic to him and his vision can agree that character questions were his undoing.

Where does this leave us? Hopefully you aren’t dealing with the kind of issues we have seen in our political process lately, but you should be asking yourself what your character is like.

Am I honest? Am I who I say I am? Do I do what is right? Am I responsible? Am I the same behind closed doors as I am in public? Am I a person of integrity? These are the most important questions. The way your followers answer them about you will determine to what degree they follow you. Will people follow you if your character is less than stellar? Maybe. But all other things being the same, having a strong character will put you over the top.

Logic, passion and ethics are the three legs of persuasion. Combine becoming a person with a vision who is logical and well-thought-out with a passionate pursuit, and you will be well on your way to persuading people and achieving your organization’s goal. The key will be what kind of character you have. If you develop a fine, strong character, with high personal ethics, you will have all three legs of persuasion—and you will become the leader you were meant to be!

You can—and will—develop a strong vision that will appeal to people and cause them to follow. The key, as we see above, is to make sure that your vision influences people on all three levels: the head, the heart and in how they view your character.

Have a great week!

Chris Widener

“The challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; be kind, but not weak; be bold, but not a bully; be thoughtful, but not lazy; be humble, but not timid; be proud but not arrogant; have humor, but without folly.”

—Jim Rohn
Questions for Reflection

Q. Would you say that you have become more than average? Enough to become a leader? A great leader? Why or why not? If not, why not?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Q. Character? At what level is your character? Is it high enough to lead those you want to follow? What could you do to strengthen your character?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Q. What kind of vision do you have for the group you lead? Is it clear? Is it compelling? Is it big enough?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
**Action Steps This Week**

1. Take one or two specific areas in which you need to work on your character this week and discipline yourself to become stronger in that area. For example, if you have trouble with "little white lies," begin to be completely truthful. Write comments here.

2. Define a couple of areas in which you are average. Then decide what you can specifically do to raise yourself to above average. Write comments here.

3. Perform at least two specific actions per day to communicate in such a way that will lead your team to new heights.
   
   A. 
   
   B. 
This week we will be listening to CD Nine of Brian Tracy’s *Success Mastery Academy*.

**PREVIEW OF BRIAN TRACY’S CD NINE:**
✦ Leadership—the Critical Difference
✦ The Qualities of Leadership
✦ Courage and Character
✦ Taking Risk and Going Boldly
✦ The Importance of Integrity
✦ Truthfulness in All Things
✦ Accept Responsibility
And More!

Notes for CD Nine from Brian Tracy’s *Success Mastery Academy*