

ASSESSING YOUR OWN CHARACTER

By Dr. John C. Maxwell

As we discussed last time, self-assessment is tortuous, but crucial to our development. Learning the laws of leadership is an essential part of every leader's growth. These laws are foundational for teaching us how leadership works. But effective leaders have more going for them than a set of skills. The best leaders are effective because of who they are on the inside. Any attempt to lead apart from character is assured of failure.

Gulf War hero, General Norman Schwarzkopf was once asked how soldiers in the field react when their leader is taken down. His response? "Soldiers are naturally inclined to follow the person with the highest character." This reality transcends war. If the designated leader in any organization is perceived as having character flaws, his or her team will inevitably begin to follow another person in the organization whom they see as having more integrity.

To ascend to and stay at the highest level of leadership, we must develop essential character qualities from the inside out; constantly evaluating ourselves for any flaws that could shipwreck our abilities.

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