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THE 21 IRREFUTABLE LAWS OF LEADERSHIP

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BEYOND
Become Someone Who

LUNCH &
LEARN



Beyond Talent

Lunch & Learn Facilitator Guide

Beyond Talent

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How to Use this Resource

Purpose

Thank you for your desire to guide people in their personal leadership growth. As a facilitator of a weekly Lunch & Learn group, you will find great satisfaction in walking with others as you grow together. John Maxwell asserts that “personal and organizational effectiveness is proportionate to the strength of leadership.” In order to become better leaders, each of us must personally grow as leaders and, as a result, we help others to follow suit.

This Facilitator Guide is designed to help you steer the process, encourage discussion, and model effective leadership to your group. Whether you are new to facilitation or have extensive experience, it is important that you take time to read through this guide before beginning your weekly Lunch & Learn group.

There are two benefits from reading through this facilitator guide. First, you will see that a lot of the preparation has been done for you, and it will challenge you to think of other creative ways to facilitate the group. Second, if you decide to let others facilitate, which is strongly recommended, they can read the guide themselves to prepare for upcoming Lunch & Learn sessions.

Ultimately, Lunch & Learn groups are a great method for encouraging personal development and getting to know people in a setting you would not normally experience together.

Creating an Environment with Values, Goals, and Expectations

When you start your Lunch & Learn group, it is important that you create an environment built with values, goals, and expectations. People need to know what they are committing to, and they want to feel like they can contribute to the formation of the group. This will create a sense of ownership. As you begin to meet, it's your responsibility as facilitator to outline expectations and form some of the framework for the group. From there, allow other members to make their contributions as well. Here are some of the core values, goals, and expectations you can include in your initial meeting before diving into the content.

Values

- **Relationship** – As the group meets, some great relationships will begin to be built. Challenge the group to realize that this is an opportunity to build and invest in one another during the length of the group, an opportunity they may not have otherwise had.
- **Respect** – During the time together, there will be great conversations and different points of view. This is okay and part of what creates a healthy dialogue. Every member of the group should feel that their input is respected and valued.
- **Value** – There will be different personalities in the group. Every person should be allowed to express their opinions and know it is place where they can do so. They should trust that nothing shared within the confines of the group will be met with hostility or aggression.
- **Safe group** – What is said in the group should stay in the group. Most organizations are forbidden by law to have employees promise confidentiality, but the group should commit to keeping its environment a safe place for discussion.
- **Other values** – Ask the group members if there any other values they would like to add to make the group their own.

Goals

- **Explore and integrate the content** – Each person should make a commitment to preparing for the group each week in an effort to become a better leader.
- **Ready for the discussion** – This is not a class, so it is vital that each person contribute, as the facilitator's role is just to bring structure to the communication—not to teach. The facilitator will at times ask probing questions, but group members are encouraged to ask their own questions as well.
- **Other goals** – Ask the group members if there are any other goals they would like to add to make the group their own.

Expectations

- **Commitment** – Each group member should make a commitment to the group and to themselves that they will actively participate in the group, be on time, come prepared, and engage in the discussion.
- **Time** – Decide on a consistent time and place to meet each week that will allow you to have a great discussion and eat within an hour.
- **Amount of Material to Cover** – Calculate how many weeks you will spend on this book and cover the appropriate number of chapters per week in order to finish the book. (Note: The Facilitator Guide builds out each chapter as a facilitation unit, but it is common that you will need to cover more than one chapter a week. Combine materials according to the number of weeks you have to cover the material.)
- **Communication** – Ask group members to e-mail you if they plan to be absent at any time so you can plan appropriately.
- **Facilitation** – We recommend that you give everyone a chance to facilitate, but you know the group best and can decide what might work well for your particular group.
- **Other expectations** – Ask the group if there any other expectations they would like to add to make the group their own.

Concluding Value

As you wrap up your discussion about values, goals, and expectations, it is extremely important to emphasize that the Lunch & Learn group is not a session for complaining. Instead, the sessions are to objectively talk about the subjects and how one can apply the subjects into one's life or team. By directing the discussion to be constructive and positive, it will help members focus on changing their immediate spheres of influence. The Lunch & Learn group is not a group to vent about people or problems. Yes, there will be discussions about the workplace and implementing the ideas into one's life, but everyone must be mindful to keep these conversations at an objective level instead of an emotional one. True leadership confronts issues and does not foster the growth of division and strife, so at times you will need to gently redirect the group to keep conversations from spiraling downward.

Facilitator Responsibilities

Lunch & Learn groups need some administration work for them to be successful. The facilitator should be responsible in the following areas:

- Recruit people for the group if necessary.
- Define with group members the structure and formation of the group in terms of values, goals, and expectations.
- Be prepared to lead members through the agreed upon amount of material each week. Also, prepare your facilitation materials prior to the group meeting each week.
- Coordinate a consistent time and place to meet. You will also need to communicate with the group from time to time for administrative reasons.
- E-mailing the questions to group members prior to the Lunch & Learn session may help with group discussion.
- Motivate group members toward self-examination, reflection, and action planning with respect to the topics.
- If necessary, provide feedback on the Lunch & Learn group to other leaders within your organization.

Facilitation Tips

Here are several practices that may help your Lunch & Learn group.

- Tips for good questions:
 - Ask open-ended questions, not those that can be answered with a simple, one-word answer.
 - Ask questions that evoke feelings, thoughts, and insights.
 - Ask questions that require personal examples.
 - Ask questions that stimulate people to apply what they are learning.
- Read all the assigned work prior to meeting. Make notes in the margins of the book and record questions as they arise. Feel free to use your own questions as you like, instead of the questions in the Facilitator Guide.
- Creative activities – Incorporate other ways to promote discussion and change things up from week to week. For example, if you find an article related to the topic, bring it for everyone to read at an appropriate time and use it as part of the discussion.

The Structure of the Facilitator Guide

Weekly Lunch & Learn groups are facilitated group discussions. You will not be lecturing or teaching the group, but encouraging members to discuss what they have been learning. Within each chapter of the Guide are opening questions and some facilitated questions, but they are to be used as conversation starters or to bring the group back on track as necessary. Plan to share your own reflections, experiences, and questions, but limit your input. You should only be talking about 10 to 15 percent of the time. Stimulate others to share, listen attentively when they speak, and affirm discussions based on other group members' questions and insights. The following structure is provided to help take some of the pressure off you as a facilitator, but we encourage you to build upon this structure. You know your group best, and you can create even more intentional and relevant questions based on your group members and work environment.

Main Point – The main point section of each chapter is to help you frame the chapter as you read and prepare for the Lunch & Learn group. It will aid you in refining your questions and activities each week.

Opening Question Options – Each of these questions are designed to begin discussion or to help people in your group get to know each other better.

Facilitation Question Options – These questions are designed to probe the group with some of the major concepts from each chapter.

Wrap-up – The wrap-up section is left blank for you to jot down some of the topics that were discussed so you can summarize and positively reinforce the ideas at the end of the Lunch & Learn session.

The Weekly Challenge – Have group members' share how they are going to apply the concept that week into their personal life somehow during the week. Take note of what every person says so you can encourage them in their personal growth throughout the week.

Final Thought

As the facilitator of the Lunch & Learn group, remember that there is a need for structure, but don't allow your structure to get in the way of personal growth. Lunch & Learn groups are for personal development, and getting through all the material should not be the goal of every group session.

***Beyond Talent* by John C. Maxwell**

Introduction

In *Beyond Talent*, John C. Maxwell asserts that a person's natural abilities are overrated and frequently misunderstood. While talent is an undeniable advantage, it accomplishes nothing by itself. If talent is not paired with right decisions, it atrophies and eventually evaporates. Everyone has an area of giftedness—something they do exceptionally well. Certainly, we should pinpoint our talents and refine them. However, the pivotal choices you make in life—apart from the natural talent you possess—will set you apart from the masses of people trying to skate by on talent alone.

Chapter 1 – Belief Lifts Your Talent

Main Point | The first and greatest obstacle to success for most people is their belief in themselves. Lack of self-faith acts as a ceiling on talent. However, when people believe in themselves, they unleash their talents, tap into the resources around them, and immediately rise to a higher level.

Opening Question Options:

1. When you were a child did you believe in Santa Claus? What factors determine whether or not we place our belief in something or someone?
2. In your opinion, how does self-belief help a person to get the most out of his or her talent?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. There's a fine line between exuding self-confidence and having a puffed up view of oneself. How do you make sure your self-confidence stays healthy and doesn't turn into arrogance?
2. In which of your abilities or qualities do you take the most pride? Why?
3. Is your self-belief being impacted by the expectations other people have of you? If so, in what ways?

☞ Wrap-up:

☞ The Weekly Challenge:

Chapter 2 – Passion Energizes Your Talent

Main Point | Passion is a wellspring of energy; it's a person's source of inspiration. When you infuse passion into your talent, you take a giant leap toward fulfilling your potential. Passion carries you through the mundane, sustains you during hardship, and gives you the will to win. It's the foundation for excellent performance.

Opening Question Options:

1. What are your passions in life? What do you dream of doing?
2. Who is the most passionate person you know? What are they passionate about? In what ways is their passion noticeable?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. Who are the firefighters around you—the people who affirm your dreams and lend you encouragement? Whose fire can you help to light?
2. What happens to talent when it's missing passion?
3. What are the enemies of passion? What sorts of things threaten to numb your spirit and to prevent you from living a passionate life?

☞ Wrap-up:

☞ The Weekly Challenge:

Chapter 3 – Initiative Activates Your Talent

Main Point | Talent-plus people don't wait for the perfect opportunity to fall in their laps; they work hard to create options. They proactively pursue their dreams by seeking out mentors, finding growth environments, and maximizing the moments of each day. Instead of being paralyzed by uncertainty, the talent-plus person plunges into it determined to find the way.

Opening Question Options:

1. Are you an impulsive or analytical when it comes to decision-making? Explain.
2. When have you benefited by swiftly moving on an opportunity? Describe the situation.

Facilitation Question Options:

1. What are the root causes of procrastination? Other than time, what is lost when we delay until tomorrow what ought to be done today?
2. Have you ever made a mistake by rushing into a decision too hastily? If so, what happened? When considering a decision, how can you move quickly without being reckless?
3. What is one important task that you should do but have been reluctant to start? Why have you waited to get it done? What benefits would you gain by taking action now rather than later?

à Wrap-up:

à The Weekly Challenge:

Chapter 4 – Focus Directs Your Talent

Main Point | Worrying about tomorrow and regretting yesterday impede doing the job today. Talent-plus people learn from the past and have a plan for the future, but they know the key to execution is to attend to the present moment. They prioritize important tasks and concentrate on seeing them through to completion.

Opening Question Options:

1. Do you think texting while driving should be illegal? Why or why not? How does talking on the phone, texting, or checking emails while driving affect your ability to focus on the road?
2. How do you determine which tasks will get your attention during a workday? How far in advance do you schedule out your time at work?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. What distractions impair your ability to focus while at work? Is there anything you could do to eliminate them?
2. What is the ideal environment for you to focus your attention and to get things done?
3. Pay now and play later. Delay the rewards until you have results. However, be sure not to skip out on the celebration once the work is done. How could you reward yourself for finishing a major assignment on the job?

ð ***Wrap-up:***

ð ***The Weekly Challenge:***

Chapter 5 – Preparation Positions Your Talent

Main Point | Spectacular achievement comes from unspectacular preparation. We can be tempted to skip the preparation stage because seemingly nothing is being accomplished during it. However, preparation lays the groundwork for success. When we prepare in advance, we make better use of our energy and work more effectively when the time comes to act.

Opening Question Options:

1. When going on vacation, how far in advance do you make arrangements for transportation and lodging? How long before leaving do you pack your suitcase?
2. How do you prepare for your workday? If you commute, describe how you spend your time on the way to work. How could you best spend the opening minutes of your day to position yourself for success?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. Is it possible to over-prepare? How?
2. How do we put ourselves at a disadvantage when we fail to prepare adequately?
3. What questions do you ask yourself when preparing for an important meeting?

ð ***Wrap-up:***

ð ***The Weekly Challenge:***

Chapter 6 – Practice Sharpens Your Talent

Main Point | You play the way you practice. Don't expect to wow the crowd on the big stage when you've been giving halfhearted effort during rehearsals. On the other hand, if you've worked diligently on your craft behind the scenes, then someone is bound to notice when the lights come on.

Opening Question Options:

1. Did your parents or grandparents ever force you to practice a sport, musical instrument, or type of artwork? What was your response when they urged you to practice?
2. What role does a coach play during a team practice? Why are coaches valuable?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. Which is more important, the quantity of time spent practicing or the quality of the practice? Explain your answer.
2. Name one skill you hope to sharpen professionally. How can you practice at improving the skill?
3. What makes a practice session productive?

☞ Wrap-up:

☞ The Weekly Challenge:

Chapter 7 – Perseverance Sustains Your Talent

Main Point | Sometimes the only difference between success and failure is the will to keep going. Quitting guarantees a losing outcome. You can't make a difference if you're not even in the game. People who persevere—through adversity, pain, and fatigue—wring every last drop out of their talent and achieve the greatest victories.

Opening Question Options:

1. When have you given up on something meaningful to you? Why did you quit?
2. Fitness gyms are packed in early January as people attempt to honor their New Year's resolutions. However, by February the crowds have thinned substantially. What separates the few people who persevere in living out their New Year's resolutions from the many who abandon them?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. When have you overcome adversity in your life? Explain. How did you persevere through the difficulty?
2. When we focus our minds on the sacrifices we're making instead of the rewards we're approaching, then we put ourselves in danger of giving up. What can you do to keep your eyes on the prize during the hardships of life?
3. Encouragement energizes people to keep going. How can you praise the efforts of your people so that they're inspired to press on during tough times?

ð ***Wrap-up:***

ð ***The Weekly Challenge:***

Chapter 8 – Courage Tests Your Talent

Main Point | Whenever we attempt to build our talents we encounter resistance. Sometimes the challenge comes from within; we must conquer our fears or overcome complacency. At other times, the resistance comes from the outside: people doubt our abilities or life's circumstances conspire against us. Whatever the origin, every aspiring leader faces opposition. Only by displaying the courage to do what is necessary instead of what is easy do we allow our talent to shine.

Opening Question Options:

1. Who is the most courageous person you know? Why?
2. When have you acted courageously in spite of the fear you felt inside?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. Are courage and cowardliness contagious? If so, how? If not, why?
2. Anyone attempting to lead will be showered with criticism. How should a courageous person deal with his or her critics?
3. Regardless of our level of talent, each of us has weaknesses. What does it look like to be courageous when we bump up against our shortcomings?

ð ***Wrap-up:***

ð ***The Weekly Challenge:***

Chapter 9 – Teachability Expands Your Talent

Main Point | Since talented people advance far more rapidly than their classmates and may even be ahead of their instructors, they may be inclined to tune out their teachers. Yet, even the best and brightest have space for their talent to grow. A teachable disposition stretches and enlarges talent to its full capacity. Teachable people are fully engaged in life. They're curious and inquisitive, and they pursue knowledge and growth. They discover new pathways and grasp new insights that combine with their talent to make them exceptional leaders.

Opening Question Options:

1. What is the most profound life lesson you have learned in the past year? How did you learn it?
2. What traits does a teachable person exhibit?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. How does arrogance hinder learning?
2. In what area do you consider yourself to have lots of talent? Who is someone even better than you are in that area and what can you learn from him or her?
3. How could you plan teachable moments this month? Select a conference to attend, schedule lunch with a knowledgeable colleague, or go to the library to find books and magazines to sharpen your mind.

ð ***Wrap-up:***

ð ***The Weekly Challenge:***

Chapter 10 – Character Protects Your Talent

Main Point | Character safeguards talent from immoral and unethical behavior. A person of character not only professes core values, but lives by them as well. High-character individuals possess the self-discipline to control their emotions and to align their behavior with proper standards of right and wrong.

Opening Question Options:

1. Name one celebrity who has damaged his or her career due to character defects. How did the absence of character limit the impact of his or her talent?
2. What are a couple of your core values? Why are they important to you?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. How does a person's character develop?
2. What are the advantages of integrity (consistency between your actions and values)?
3. How has your character been tested during the past year?

☞ Wrap-up:

☞ The Weekly Challenge:

Chapter 11 – Relationships Influence Your Talent

Main Point | The people closest to you have tremendous power to elevate your talent or to diminish it. Choose your friends wisely, and surround yourself with people who value you and will add value to your life. Nothing has the capacity to enrich our lives as much as the people beside us on the journey of life.

Opening Question Options:

1. Which relationship in your life has encouraged or enlarged your talent? How?
2. How do your talents benefit from having a loving support network of friends and family?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. Think about the people closest to you in life. How would you assess their influence on you?
2. As a leader, is it okay to befriend those you lead, or should you maintain some distance from them relationally? Explain your answer.
3. What happens to talented people when they isolate themselves from their peers?

à Wrap-up:

à The Weekly Challenge:

Chapter 12 – Responsibility Strengthens Your Talent

Main Point | The growth of a person’s talent is stunted until it is put into action. Having the ability or intentions to do something is nothing compared to actually doing it. When talented people learn how to put their strengths into action for the benefit of others, they become indispensable to their teams.

Opening Question Options:

1. How has increased responsibility helped your talent to mature?
2. What does it mean to “take responsibility” for your actions?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. What is your track record of being or not being responsible?
2. Which area of responsibility has been the hardest for you to master? Why?
 1. Self-Discipline (denying yourself for the sake of something or someone more important)
 2. Follow Through (making sure assignments are completed)
 3. Dependability (being there when others need you)
 4. Stepping Forward (not waiting for someone else to do what needs to be done)
3. What are the most common excuses you hear for people being irresponsible in life? Are the excuses merited?

☞ Wrap-up:

☞ The Weekly Challenge:

Chapter 13 – Teamwork Multiplies Your Talent

Main Point | Talent has a certain narrowness to it. You likely do not have world-class ability in a wide range of skills. Yet, there are probably one or two specific areas in which you're better than almost anyone you know. The key to maximizing talent is teamwork. When you're alone, you have to do all of the work—what you're good at it or not. On a team, you have more freedom to specialize in what you do best. Being able to spend the majority of your time exercising your greatest talent multiplies your influence.

Opening Question Options:

1. Which team has been the most enjoyable for you to be a part of? Why? What was your role on the team?
2. How does a collection of individuals become a unified team?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. Think about your goals and dreams. How will you need help to attain them?
2. What characteristics define a good teammate?
3. In what ways can you strengthen the sense of community and togetherness on your team?

⌘ ***Wrap-up:***

⌘ ***The Weekly Challenge:***