Leadership Is Dead

Lunch & Learn
Executive Summary
Leadership Is Dead

Jeremie Kubicek is President and CEO of GiANT Impact, a global leadership company. Jeremie uses his creative, entrepreneurial vision to encourage leaders to build extraordinary new ventures. Today, his company develops some of the most influential concepts in America, including the Chick-fil-A Leadercast and the Catalyst brand. With a mission to transform the leadership culture of America, Kubicek encourages leaders to become significant and give of themselves to see the change they desire in themselves and in their organizations.

Introduction

Leadership has gasped its last breath, and its lifeless figure no longer captivates or inspires. In Leadership Is Dead, Jeremie Kubicek revives the concept of leadership by insisting that influence is its lifeblood. He counsels readers to abandon a shallow and insignificant mode of self-protective leadership in exchange for a lifestyle of influence characterized by giving and serving. He maintains that relationships are the surest path to influence, and he explains how to breakthrough to a life rich with significance.

Chapter 1 – Death of a Leader

Leadership, as we have known it, is dead. Society no longer can stomach leaders with power but no principles, those with vast wealth but an impoverished sense of purpose, people who are talented but unworthy of trust. A good example of this type of dying leadership is Paul Tatum, an American businessman living in Moscow in the year’s following the collapse of the Soviet Union. His self-serving leadership eventually led to his death at the hands of Russian mobsters.

Chapter 2 – My Death

Jeremie Kubicek hadn’t seen his own death approaching as quickly as it did. Coming face-to-face with his own death experience brought about change in Jeremie that would ultimately affect his style of leadership.

Chapter 3 – Why Leadership Is Dead

Conducting an autopsy on the demise of leadership shows the causes of death to be hypocrisy and self-preservation. Instead of setting a positive example and serving their constituents, leaders have abused their authority and victimized those under their power. As a result, leaders have alienated themselves from their followers, placing themselves under a shroud of suspicion and cynicism.

Reviving leadership involves switching the strategy of personal fulfillment from getting all you can to giving all you can. Influence, not control, is the most potent resource on the planet. Business interactions without influence are merely transactional. Deals might be consummated and tasks completed, but lives remain the same. Instead of simply seeking to convince, coerce, and close deals, influential leaders build relationships that change the world. To them, leadership is a course of action rather than a position of privilege.
Chapter 4 – The Wall of Self-Preservation

When the desire to safeguard turf or protect status takes priority over the desire to positively influence others, leaders plunge into mediocrity. Leaders need to understand that the protective mode isn’t a productive mode. In putting up walls to defend themselves, leaders block off others and confine their impact.

The instinct for self-preservation is natural, but it becomes a detriment when the impulse to defend the status quo overrides the desire for growth and constructive change. When you clutch tightly to what you have, you’re unable to reach out and take hold of something better. In laboring to preserve your reputation, you lessen the influence you can have on others. Leaders who think first and foremost about themselves find it nearly impossible to gain the trust of their team.

Chapter 5 – For Me, Against Me, or for Yourself?

Consciously or unconsciously, every leader has an agenda. Agendas motivate leaders to act and reveal their intent. Understanding your agenda serves as the entry point into leadership. To be a true influencer, you must monitor your motives and actions, and align them with your core values.

Leadership is influence, and influence is power. How that power is leveraged depends on a leader’s agenda. Unfortunately, the majority of people have self-promoting agendas. They aren’t necessarily against others, but they are primarily driven by self-centered motives. On the contrary, the best leaders demonstrate that they are for others by making themselves valuable to them. These authentic leaders have a hunger to serve, and they alertly monitor their motives in the process of maintaining healthy relationships. Motivated by the goal of exerting positive influence, they cultivate unwavering personal character, establish professional competence, and intentionally act on behalf of others.

Chapter 6 – The Breakthrough

The transformation from being an individual achiever to an influential leader involves abandoning a model of self-preservation for one of service. Making the shift doesn’t come easily, however, and many people feel prohibited from serving others due to a lack of bandwidth. However, seldom does anything external actually prohibit people from breaking through to a life of influence. Rather, they inhibit themselves by giving in to fears, insecurities, or self-defeating behaviors. Oftentimes the catalyst for breaking free of inhibition is unvarnished feedback from a fellow leader. Self-awareness opens the door for change to occur.

Chapter 7 – Influence Is Power

Benevolent leaders wield influence to empower their teams to take action so that they can accomplish organizational objectives. Empowering leaders liberate their people by unleashing their potential, whereas overpowering leaders dominate their people by squelching their initiative. Dominators manipulate people through deception or exploitation to advance their own agenda. Oppositely, liberators bestow authority on others and facilitate the growth and self-fulfillment of the individuals on their team. In exchange, liberators receive respect, gratitude, and goodwill from others, along with the momentum that comes from having energized those they serve.
Chapter 8 – It’s All About Relationships

To grow in influence, leaders must shift their vantage point. Instead of fearing losing out to others, they must learn to see people’s needs as joyful opportunities to add value. Few leaders excel relationally because personal influence costs something. It demands commitment. True influencers are willing to expend their time, energy, and resources.

Opportunities abound for those who put others first. A true paradox of leadership is that when you pour yourself out on behalf of others, you gain reciprocal benefits and rewards. Wise leaders don’t short-circuit the process of building relationships. They train themselves to think in terms of long-term connection rather than short-term gain. Placing people before profits, they habitually give before receiving, plant before harvesting, and serve before asking.

Chapter 9 – No Risk, No Reward

When leaders see service as a drain on their time and energy, they hold back their influence. Yet, if they risk taking the first step in initiating a relationship, they discover that giving to others fills and fuels them. Exercising influence taps into an unlimited source of energy: the feeling of significance.

The primary reward for living a life of influence is the gift of trust. When you give of yourself to another person, you establish a bond of respect and appreciation, and you make a rare and powerful impact. People are looking for leaders; they crave guidance and care. If you’re willing to supply service, you’ll get permission to influence others substantially in exchange.

Chapter 10 – Why You Probably Won’t Do This

Most leaders never reach levels of significant influence because their instincts for self-preservations are too strong. To overcome the inertia of selfishness, you must get past your fears of losing something and dare to give up everything. Influence happens through a process: You break through the walls of self-protection, reach out to the people around you, and act purposefully to aid them. When you engage in this process, you become a memorable person: someone whose life leaves a lasting impression in the hearts and minds of others.
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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 are 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 are 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.
Introduction

Society’s rampant loss of respect for authority figures has hollowed out the once-revered notion of leadership. In Leadership Is Dead Jeremie Kubicek brings the concept back to life by reintroducing its true nature— influence. He encourages you to push past the confines of self-preservation in order to experience the rich rewards of a lifestyle of service. In lieu of power-hungry leadership, he presents a model of influence characterized by generosity and empowerment.

Chapter 1 – Death of a Leader

Main Point | A spate of political scandal and corporate fraud has dealt a deathblow to the reputation of leadership. People not only have lost respect for specific leaders, they have abandoned faith in the position of leadership itself. Weary of witnessing self-centered leaders abuse authority, the rising generation is searching for a rebirth of authentic influence. They’re looking for leaders who are motivated by a mission greater than self-interest.

Opening Question Options:

1. Think back to your first job. Did you have a good boss or a poor one? How did this initial experience with your supervisor shape your conception of leadership?
2. In your opinion, how can leaders counteract the prevailing attitude of cynicism toward those in authority?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. In leadership, what distinguishes influence from manipulation?
2. Should leaders be held to a higher standard than their followers? Why or why not?
3. Name one leader you admire. Why do you respect him or her?

Wrap-up:

The Weekly Challenge:
Chapter 2 – My Death

Main Point | Leaders who chase after status and accomplishment eventually come to realize the hollowness of a life lived solely for oneself. The richest people in life are those who focus on others. They are enlivened and energized through service, and they find fulfillment by adding value to the people within their sphere of influence.

Opening Question Options:

1. Have you ever suffered severe injuries or undergone a near-death experience? If so, describe what happened. How did that experience change you?
2. What are one or two items that are on your “bucket list.”

Facilitation Question Options:

1. What is the best way to break an addiction to accomplishment?
2. Do you think someone has to come to a crisis point in order to change?
3. Take a moment to imagine your funeral ceremony. How would you like to be remembered by your family and friends?

 Wrap-up:

 The Weekly Challenge:
Chapter 3 – Why Leadership Is Dead

Main Point | Leadership has lost its luster due to the unresponsiveness, hypocrisy, and egotism of those in authority. To revive leadership, a new breed of influencers must sacrifice their own security to uplift and inspire others. In order to meet the challenge, these leaders will have to counteract instincts for self-preservation, and choose instead to serve and empower their teams.

Opening Question Options:

1. In your interactions with salespeople, have you encountered a higher percentage in Group A or Group B?
   - **Group A:** Relate to you, seek to understand your need, and offer to help you find a solution.
   - **Group B:** Pressure you to buy whatever product earns them the biggest commission and show no intention of getting to know you.

2. Describe a time when you benefited by giving yourself away. Was it difficult for you to make that sacrifice?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. How do leaders build self-awareness of their strengths and weaknesses?
2. How do we, as leaders, protect ourselves from leadership blind spots.
3. How would you describe the leadership culture in your company? Is it healthy or unhealthy? Why?

Wrap-up:

The Weekly Challenge:
Chapter 4 – The Wall of Self Preservation

Main Point | The more you labor to guard your status or reputation, the less influence you have. Self-protection isn’t the issue; overprotection is the problem. You have to face your insecurities and fears in order to become a leader worth following. Instead of worrying about what you have to lose or looking at what you stand to gain, focus on what you have to give.

Opening Question Options:

1. When can the instinct for self-defense be helpful? When is it harmful?
2. Have past work experiences caused you to lean toward self-preservation or away from it? Why?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. When have you stepped outside of your comfort zone in order to grow as a leader?
2. Why are so many leaders trapped within the walls of self-preservation? By building walls to keep others out, what are they trying to protect?
3. What are you most fearful of losing? How are those fears holding you back?

 Wrap-up:

The Weekly Challenge:
Chapter 5 – For Me, Against Me, or for Yourself?

Main Point | Rarely do people seek to bring you down in life. Yet, the reality is that the majority of people are self-interested, and they will push you aside to get what they want. The starting point of unselfish leadership is awareness of our intentions. True influencers scrutinize their motives to ensure that they are acting in concert with their core values.

Opening Question Options:

1. How can you tell if someone is “for themselves?”
2. The business world can be intensely combative, and even co-workers frequently vie with one another for promotions or desirable assignments. In such a hypercompetitive climate, how can you convince your colleagues that you are for them and not against them?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. We must give trust to become trustworthy. What makes it difficult to initiate trust in relationships?
2. How does credibility differ from competence?
3. Whether you intend to or not, you exert influence on everyone around you by what you say and do. Name an existing business relationship in which you would like to gain influence. How could you be more purposeful with your words and deeds in order to strengthen the relationship?
4. As an exercise in influence, take turns sharing how others in the group have influenced positively.

Wrap-up:

The Weekly Challenge:
Chapter 6 – The Breakthrough

Main Point | As we journey through life, we all develop self-preserving habits. To lead at the highest levels, we have to gain awareness of these behaviors and adjust them. Changing established patterns isn’t easy, but there’s no limit to the joy, gratification, and impact we can have when we break free of them.

Opening Question Options:

1. Who do you trust to give you honest feedback about your flaws?
2. Discontent can motivate us to change the status quo, but too much discontent can poison our outlook on life. How does a person identify problems that need to be fixed without becoming pessimistic about everything that’s wrong with their world?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. Which professional skills have you gained or upgraded during the past few years? How did you elevate or expand those skills?
2. What behaviors or attitudes are holding you back from success? What is your game plan for changing them?
3. What obstacles are hindering your team from reaching its full potential? How do you plan to break through these barriers?

☀ Wrap-up:

☀ The Weekly Challenge:
Chapter 7 – Influence Is Power

Main Point | Influence involves the flow of power, and it can be wielded to sustain life or bring destruction. Leaders who harness power and use their influence in the best interests of others are revered, successful, and significant. They empower and serve their followers rather than overpowering and manipulating them.

Opening Question Options:

1. Have you ever been on a team with a manipulative person? How did their behavior impact you and the team you were on?
2. Leaders empower their team members by sharing the burden. Yet, leaders also are responsible for results and can be held accountable if a teammate drops the ball. How can you empower people without sacrificing results and progress?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. Does a person’s private morality affect his or her ability to lead publicly? Why or why not?
2. Who is the most powerful leader with whom you have worked professionally? What was the source of his or her power? How did they leverage their power?
3. What are specific ways in which the leaders in your organization empower their team members?

Wrap-up:

The Weekly Challenge:
Chapter 8 – It’s All About Relationships

Main Point | Influence cannot be gained apart from commitment. The truth is, putting relationships first and giving yourself for the benefit of others positions you for unexpected opportunities. Giving is not about losing something; it’s about putting yourself and your gifts to work for the benefit of all.

Opening Question Options:

1. Why is it so difficult to keep our focus on relationships instead of prioritizing potential opportunities?
2. Have you ever worked in an environment that valued strong relationships? How did that mentality benefit the team?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. What do we risk when we commit ourselves to building a relationship with another person?
2. Why are we often tempted to overlook relationships and devote our attention to tasks?
3. Who has sacrificed time, energy, or resources to make a difference in your life?
4. Take the last 15 minutes of this session and encourage members to write hand-written thank you notes to these people who have influenced them.

Wrap-up:

The Weekly Challenge:
Chapter 9 – No Risk, No Reward

**Main Point** | When you look to fulfill the needs of other people, you may be taken advantage of from time to time. Yet, the risk of putting the needs of others before your own pays off in extraordinary ways. The reward for living a lifestyle of influence comes when you establish a relationship of mutual trust and appreciation. These enriching relationships transform routine business and personal interactions into thrilling adventures and unforgettable experiences.

**Opening Question Options:**

1. What are some of the non-relational things we pursue in life that don’t ultimately satisfy?
2. Think of a key relationship in your life, and how has that person and relationship enriched who you are?

**Facilitation Question Options:**

1. Have you ever been betrayed in a professional relationship? If so, how did the experience affect your willingness to initiate relationships going forward?
2. Think about the relationships in your life. What separates the ones that are draining from those that are fulfilling?
3. What rewards do we reap when we gain significant influence in a relationship?

**Wrap-up:**

**The Weekly Challenge:**
Chapter 10 – Why You Probably Won’t Do This

Main Point | Most people never overcome the inertia of self-preservation, and consequently and leave much influence on the table. True influence is found when you change yourself in order to change the world. As with any choice, the decision of whether or not to pursue a lifestyle of influence carries consequences. By declining, you join the ranks of leaders everywhere living for themselves and experiencing the limitations and ramifications of that lifestyle. However, if you accept the challenge of being an influential leader, you open yourself to the joy of seeing others succeed and the satisfaction of having made a significant impact in their lives.

Opening Question Options:

1. When have you made a significant transition in your life? What caused you to make the change? Are you glad you decided to make the transition, or do you regret it?
2. Can you think of a time when you left potential influence on the table and what were the ramifications?

Facilitation Question Options:

1. How would you describe the influence culture of your organization? If you could change one thing about it, what would it be?
2. What is your style of influence? In what ways do you connect with people and add value to them?
3. Out of everything you’ve learned over the past ten weeks, what is one practical step that you plan on implementing to increase your influence?
4. In the following weeks, spend some time working through the questions on page 193 and 194 of Leadership is Dead. Be intentional about your plan and watch your influence grow.

⚠️ Wrap-up:

⚠️ The Weekly Challenge: