

THE LAW OF ADDITION

Leaders Add Value by Serving Others

Many people view leadership the same way they view success, hoping to go as far as they can, to climb the ladder, to achieve the highest position possible for their talent. But contrary to conventional thinking, I believe the bottom line in leadership isn't how far we advance ourselves but how far we advance others. That is achieved by serving others and adding value to their lives. The interaction between every leader and follower is a relationship, and all relationships either add to or subtract from a person's life. If you are a leader, then trust me, you are having either a positive or a negative impact on the people you lead.

Adding value to others through service doesn't just benefit the people being served. It allows the leaders to experience the following: Fulfillment in leading others; Leadership with the right motives; The ability to perform significant acts as leaders; The development of a leadership team; An attitude of service on a team.

I have developed four guidelines to help me add value to others. Three of them are fundamental and can be used by anyone desiring to practice the Law of Addition. The fourth is based on my faith. If that might offend you or you don't have interest in that area, then simply skip it.

We Add Value to Others When We Truly Value Others – “When a person moves into a position of authority, he or she gives up the right to abuse people.” Effective leaders go beyond not harming others, and they intentionally help others. To do that, they must value people and demonstrate that they care in such a way that their following know it. Leaders who add value by serving believe in their people before their people believe in them and serve others before they are served.

We Add Value to Others When We Make Ourselves More Valuable to Others – The whole idea of adding value to other people depends on the idea that you have something of value to add. You can't give what you do not possess. What do you have to give others? Can you teach skills? Can you give opportunities? Can you give insight and perspective gained through experience? The more you continue to pursue personal growth, the more you will continue to have to offer.

We Add Value to Others When We Know and Relate to What Others Value – As leaders, how do we know and relate to what our people value? We listen. Inexperienced leaders are quick to lead before knowing anything about the people they intend to lead. But mature leaders listen, learn, and then lead. They listen to their people's stories. They become acquainted with their aspirations. They discover what is valuable to them. And then they lead based upon what they've learned. When they do that, everybody wins – the organization, the leader, and the followers.

We Add Value to Others When We Do Things That God Values – I already mentioned that you may want to skip this final point, but for me it's a non-negotiable. I believe that God desires us not only to treat people with respect, but also to actively reach out to them and serve them. Scripture provides many examples and descriptions of how we should conduct ourselves.

The attitude of the leader affects the atmosphere of the organization. If you desire to add value by serving others, you will become a better leader. Your people will achieve more, develop more loyalty, and have a better time getting things done. That is the power of the Law of Addition.