



LEADERCAST

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SPEAKER Q&A: JOHN MAXWELL

Who has influenced you the most in your life? Why? Describe the relationship.

The greatest influence on my life has definitely been my father, Melvin Maxell. His integrity, his leadership, and his positive attitude have always been models to me. When I was growing up, he was my hero. And he continues to be while in his eighties. He is always trying to be a positive influence in the lives of people and add value to them. That is what I aspire to do.

What has been a defining moment in your role as a leader?

I have had many defining moments, and I think that is true for all leaders, because leaders who are growing are continually being redefined by their choices, relationships, and experiences. So I'll choose to tell you about my first defining moment.

It happened with I was in the fifth grade. Our class was doing a civics project, and someone had to be elected as the judge for it. And my class elected me. It was in that moment that I realized that people liked me and saw leadership potential in me. And that made me see that potential in myself. That's an important moment in any leader's life because you must first see yourself as a leader before you will be able to take responsibility for leading.

What are you most passionate about?

Adding value to people. I live for that. Early in my leadership, I was self-centered. I led others to fulfill my own vision. As I matured, I realized that my goal as a leader was to add value to others. There's a big difference between using people to help you fulfill a vision and helping people so that you can fulfill a vision together.

These days my passion for adding value is focused in two main areas: EQUIP, my non-profit organization that trains leadership internationally, and The John Maxwell Company, which provides training, resources, and coaching to leaders throughout the United States.

How did you get to where you are today? What advice would you give to other leaders who are working towards their goals?

I've gotten to where I am through a lot of hard work and the kindness of God. My advice to other leaders is to work hard every day, stay disciplined (especially in the area of integrity) and follow opportunities as they present themselves. I always had short-term goals, but rarely long-term ones. I have tried to make the most of opportunities, and to be honest, that has made me much more successful than I ever dreamed or imagined that I could be.

Define leadership.

Leadership is influence—nothing more, nothing less.

What are some ways for Chick-fil-A Leadercast attendees to apply your talk to their professional life?

In regard to what I spoke about at Chick-fil-A Leadercast, I would recommend that people take a look at my book *The Five Levels of Leadership* which will be available in October. It has not only an in-depth look at the Five Levels, but also provides application teaching how to grow through each of the levels. For daily encouragement and information on what I'm doing, I recommend that people follow me at [Twitter.com/JohnCMaxwell](https://twitter.com/JohnCMaxwell), read my blog at JohnMaxwellOnLeadership.com, and visit JohnMaxwell.com.