

Leadership Principles from Acts

Discovering Your Personal Mission (Lay a Path)

Consider the vision that Jesus communicated to His apostles ([Acts 1:8](#)). It began with a **promise** of how they would be able to fulfill the vision. They would not be operating under their own power. Their part would be obedience. He would provide the power. It included **strategy**: Jerusalem, then Judea and Samaria, and finally to the end of the earth. He made the **direction clear**. **The vision gave the compelling big picture unencumbered with details**. The Holy Spirit would provide the **details** as they moved in the direction He had specified. Compare the characteristics of the vision Jesus gave the apostles with your **personal vision**. What is the source providing the power to fulfill your vision? Is the strategy **clear**? Is the vision **compelling**? Where are you getting direction as you move forward?

Choosing a Team Member (Lay A Path)

With the removal of Judas, the 12 Disciples became 11. They needed a replacement. What did they do? Did they quickly select the first person available? No. **They stopped, read Scripture, made sure what they planned to do aligned with it, then prayed specifically for God's direction in selecting a replacement** ([Acts 1:15-26](#)). Before you choose your next team member, partner, or staff person, bathe the decision in prayer. Also consider the 4C model. Look for:

- **Character**
- **Chemistry**
- **Competency**
- **Calling.**

Can They Tell How Much You Care? (Engage Others)

In [Acts 3](#), notice how Peter gained an audience. Before he shared the gospel, he used the gifts he had to show **compassion**. People noticed the result of his action. This gave Peter an invitation to speak. As a leader, your credibility will come from both your words and your actions. People are more likely to listen if you wait for their invitation to speak. They are more likely to give an invitation if your actions are noteworthy. Are you using your gifts in ways that demonstrate God's love? **Remember, people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care!** Determine to let your compassion for people earn you respect for your ideas and willingness to act on them.

Charisma (Engage Others)

Charisma is the ability to draw people to you or your cause. Would you like to be more charismatic? Look at the qualities that made Peter charismatic in [Acts 2:14-20](#).

Quality	Try These
Confidence	Enjoy the life God has given you. Be thankful. Rely on God.
Conviction	Know God's plan for you. Speak from your heart.
Connection	Focus on others. Treat them well. Expect the best from them. Be vulnerable and real.
Compassion	Give people practical answers to their needs. Share your heart and your resources.

Practice What You Preach (Engage Others)

Peter could speak credibly about persecutions because he endured them himself. He practiced what he preached. **Acts 5** describes how he suffered for his faith. **Acts 12** reports his imprisonment. Eventually, the Romans crucified him upside down instead of right-side up. Peter's message is more reliable because he backed it up with his life. Leader, do others take your requests seriously? If not, check your life to see if you are doing what you ask others to do. Do you have credibility?

Keeping Ego in Check (Engage Others)

Success in leadership sometimes brings rock-star status. People lined the streets "laid [the sick] on beds...that at least the **shadow** of Peter passing by might fall on some of them" (**Acts 5:15**). When was the last time people lined up outside your office hoping to simply touch your shadow? In spite of his popularity, Peter singularly focused on the mission. He didn't let an inflated ego get the best of him. As a leader, how do you keep your ego in check? Do you have people in your life who will tell you what you NEED to hear instead of what you WANT to hear? If not, get some ASAP. Your leadership and legacy depend on it! Remember, God calls us to "...be submissive to one another, and be **clothed** with **humility**, for 'God **resists** the **proud**, but gives **grace** to the **humble**.' Therefore **humble yourselves** under the mighty hand of God..." (**1Pet 5:5-6**).

Delegate (Engage Others)

Burnout. Frustration. Redlining. Leading on empty. These are all words that characterize most leaders today. The old adage is true: if you want something done, give it to someone who is busy! Unfortunately, this is the life of most leaders. There is too much on their plates and not enough hours in the day to meet the ever-growing demands. Thankfully, the early church leaders experienced this too. Through their actions, we receive a game plan on how to effectively delegate responsibilities that take away from our A1 priorities. Read **Acts 6:1-7** to see this unfold. Take notes to help you determine what you can apply to your own leadership situations.

Source of Strong Commitment (Demonstrate Core Values)

Consider the commitment of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. What factors helped Stephen be a leader of such strong commitment? Consider how strong the following are in your life:

Solid biblical foundation	Acts 7:2-38
Eyes fixed on Jesus	Acts 7:55
Godly perspective during trials	Acts 7:60

Master of Encouragement (Engage Others)

Consider the leadership behaviors of Barnabas in **Acts 11:22-24**. He is alert to see God's grace working in the lives of others. He speaks words of encouragement to strengthen their resolve. As a leader, do you watch for signs of God working in the lives of others? Does this bring you joy? Do you encourage and strengthen them with your words?

Willing to Be Smaller (Demonstrate Core Values)

In the Bible, a name change reflects a life change. Saul becomes Paul (**Acts 13:2, Acts 13:9**). Saul means desired by man (**Php 3:4-6**). Paul means little (**Php 3:7-11**). God wants to make us smaller so He can use us in a bigger way (**Luke 9:48**). Are you willing to be smaller and allow God to use you in a bigger way?

Style vs Content (Engage Others)

Paul **adapted** his preaching **style** to his audience without changing the **core** of his message. Compare how he quoted Scripture to Jews in a synagogue (**Acts 13:16-41**) to how he quoted pop-culture and poetry to Gentile philosophers (**Acts 17:22-31**). **How do you vary your communication style to connect with others while keeping your message intact?** Think of ways you can improve this skill. Which people in your world pose the biggest communication challenge for you?

Group Decision Making (Engage Others)

Consider the **decision-making process** in [Acts 15](#). Notice how the various participants listened to one another's views. Before finalizing a decision, it is helpful to know one another's minds and move together toward an answer. What can you learn from this to enhance your own decision-making process? How much effort do you spend seeking to understand other's views before you make a decision? What do you do to help others understand your perspective before they make decisions?

Attitude Check (Demonstrate Core Values)

[Acts 16:25-34](#) records the experiences of Paul and Silas in jail. When they were in prison, they sang songs and hymns praising God! What if you were in prison for proclaiming Christ? **Would you rejoice, pray, and sing or would you grumble and complain?** How is your attitude when you face smaller difficulties at home, work, or church? Do you welcome difficulties with rejoicing or do you scold them with pessimism?

Is It Yours to Fix? (Achieve Results)

How do you **respond** when someone brings you a complaint? Read [Acts 18:12-16](#). Notice that Gallio refused to address the complaint because it was not within his jurisdiction. **As leaders, we are inclined to solve problems. We like to fix things.** Sometimes, we fail to realize that **some problems are not ours to solve**. When the problem is not your responsibility, you may be able to use the complaint as a teaching moment. While you make it clear you will not solve the problem for the person, you can point out resources and options to consider.

Time Alone with God (Demonstrate Core Values)

Notice in [Acts 20:13](#) that Paul went on foot while others sailed. As leaders, we need time apart from others to be alone with God. We need time for prayer ([Mark 1:30-35](#)). We need direction from God ([Luke 6:9-13](#)). How often do you set aside time to be alone with God?

Would They Miss You? (Engage Others)

Have you ever had to say goodbye to a group of people you had led? How did they react? Read [Acts 20:37-38](#). Falling on someone's neck is a Middle Eastern expression of sorrow. What was it about Paul that inspired that reaction? If you had to leave, what about you would people miss?

Hear the Other Side (Engage Others)

As a leader, there will be times when you get reports from some people about others. How do you handle situations like that? When Festus arrived, the Jews were quick to accuse Paul of being dangerous and unfit to live ([Acts 25:14-21](#)). Festus informed them that the Romans would not allow punishment without first hearing the other side of a matter. Do you insist on hearing the other side ([John 7:51](#)) before making a decision?

Source of Direction (Lay a Path)

When Paul was recounting his story to King Agrippa, he made a leadership statement that would be wise for every leader to consider. He said, "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision," ([Acts 26:19](#)). Once Paul received the vision from God, he viewed anything else but that vision as **disobedience!** Do you have that kind of resolve?

Your Character as a Safety Net (Demonstrate Core Values)

The proven character of a leader can be a safety net to many others ([Acts 27:41-44](#)). The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners. They didn't want any of them to escape. Only because the centurion wanted to save Paul, did the other prisoners also remain alive. Consider how your proven character can be a safety net to others.

Always a Missionary (Engage Others)

What story is your life writing ([Acts 28:30-31](#))? Do you see yourself as a missionary in all parts of your life, always sharing the good news ([Php 1:12-20](#)), always buying your field ([Mat 13:44](#))? As a leader, are you allowing Christ to work in and through you ([Php 1:3-6](#))?