The Mentor Leader by Tony Dungy

FOREWORD by Jim Caldwell

“The team had a policy of placing character in the forefront of the player-selection process. It was a common organizational practice to eliminate players—even talented “difference-makers”—from consideration in the draft if they possessed questionable character flaws.”

“...the team is committed to purposeful, effective communication.”

“Tony rarely displays a visible reaction to uncomfortable situations.”

“I also asked him whether he was inclined to demonstrate a show of force in response to the incident from the previous week. His simple five-word reply – “It is not about me” – resonated with my spirit, and it is one of the most profound lessons I learned from him.”

“Tony was more interested in what was most important for the team and the franchise.”

“Level 5 leaders...
   Embody a paradoxical mix of personal humility and professional will
   Display a compelling modesty, are self-effacing and understated.
   Attribute success to factors other than themselves.
   Display a workmanlike diligence—more plow horse than show horse.
   Set up their successors for even greater success.”

“He was an active participant in our development, and he checked his ego at the door.”

“He nurtured and cultivated both players and coaches, molding without pressing, nudging without pushing, and leading without dragging.”

INTRODUCTION

“If all you’re about is winning, it’s really not worth it. I’m after things that last.” – Keli McGregor

“It isn’t a structured program that necessarily makes the difference; rather, the difference is made moment by moment by leaders who care—for others.”

“...positive, life-changing leadership is an acquired trait, learned from interaction with others who know how to lead and lead well. Leadership is not an innate, mystical gift; rather, it’s a learned ability to influence the attitudes and behavior of others.”
“…mentor leaders seek to have a direct, intentional, and positive impact on those they lead. At its core, mentoring is about building character into the lives of others, modeling and teaching attitudes and behaviors, and creating a constructive legacy to be passed along to future generations of leaders.”

“The primary focus of mentor leadership, however, is to shape the lives of people right in front of them, as they lead, guide, inspire, and encourage those people.”

“Becoming a mentor leader is not rocket science.”

“Mentor leadership can be taught and learned; but in order to be absorbed, it must be practiced.”

“Mentor leadership focuses on developing the strengths of individuals.”

“Successful mentor leaders make the people they lead better players, workers, students, or family members—and ultimately, better people.”

“…we need to understand that people are watching us and learning from us whether we’re aware of it or not.”

“Mentor leadership is all about shaping, nurturing, empowering, and growing. It’s all about relationships, integrity, and perpetual learning. Success is measured in changed lives, strong character, and eternal values rather than in material gain, temporal achievement, or status.”

“…it is primarily concerned with building and adding value to the lives of people in the process…it’s about changing lives.”

CHAPTER 1: THE MANDATE OF A MENTOR LEADER: FOCUS ON SIGNIFICANCE

“You’ve got to do your own growing, no matter how tall your grandfather was.” – Old Irish Proverb

“The goal, of course, was to win a championship, but along with that, everyone was concerned with raising the performance of all the others, with helping them become better players, better coaches, better men.”

“If they hadn’t established the types of relationships they had with each other and with the other coaches and team members, but had only counted wins and losses, they would not have had the same level of positive influence on each other, and the season would not have been successful.”

“Unity of purpose and a desire to make other people better must start at the top if these goals are going to ripple through an entire organization.”

“After a while, people see through the talk when it doesn’t line up with the walk.”

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.” – Romans 12:2

“Shortsighted leadership focuses primarily on the bottom line.”
“But without meaningful relationships, relationships we invest ourselves in, what does it all amount to?”

“If you take only one thing from this book, let it be this: Relationships are ultimately what matter – our relationships with God and with other people. The key to becoming a mentor leader is learning how to put other people first. You see, the question that burns in the heart of the mentor leader is simply this: What can I do to make other people better, to make them all that God created them to be?”

“Instead of asking, how can I lead my company, my team, or my family to a higher level of success? We should be asking ourselves, how do others around me flourish as a result of my leadership? Do they flourish at all? How does my leadership, my involvement in their lives—in whatever setting we’re in—have a positive and lasting influence and impact on them?”

“...influence, involvement, improvement, and impact are core principles of mentor leadership...”

“Simply stated, leadership is influence. By influencing another person, we lead that person. Leadership is not dependent on a formal position or role. We can find opportunities for leadership wherever we go.”

“...simply ‘being in charge’ is not evidence of leadership or leadership ability.”

“Mentor leaders understand that if we lose sight of people, we lose sight of the very purpose of leadership.”

“At the end of it all, sometimes you reach the organizational goals you’ve set, and sometimes you don’t. But either way, if you’re a leader, people’s lives should be better because of the influence you’ve had along the way.”

“Young kids with positive male role models have something to live for, somebody who is proud of them, somebody who cares about their well-being.” – Donald Miller

“Leadership, as I believe it should be understood and displayed, must first and foremost recognize that it is not enough to be successful in the word’s eyes.”

“Mentor leadership focuses on building people up, building significance into their lives, and building leaders for the next generation.”

“As you build your leadership skills, it’s important to remember that why you lead is as important as whom you lead. Leading for the benefit of others is a much more compelling and powerful motivation than leading merely to get ahead or to hit an arbitrary target.”

“...if you want to make a difference in the lives of the people you lead, you must be willing to walk alongside them, to lift and encourage them, to share moments of understanding with them, and to spend time with them, not just shout down at them from on high. Mentors build mentors. Leaders build leaders. When you look at it closely, it’s really one and the same thing.”
“The man answered, ‘You must love the Lord God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind. And, love your neighbor as yourself.’” – Luke 10:27

“The mindset of a mentor leader: It’s not about me.”

“It’s not about you. It’s not about me. It’s about others.”

“The mentor leader looks at how he or she can benefit others – which ultimately benefits the individual and the organization.”

“When it comes to effective leadership, it’s not about you and what makes you comfortable or helps you get ahead. It’s about other people.”

“Mentor leaders look beyond themselves, focusing on the people they lead and where they should be going together.”

“Am I prepared to have great success and not get any credit for it?”

“If you do it right, as a mentor leader you may make it all but impossible for other people to give you the credit.”

“The first step is to understand and appreciate that the journey is as important as the destination.”

“Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.” – Dwight D. Eisenhower

“Keep the vision out front. Don’t let your team – wherever it is – quit early.”

“Craft a mission to the best of your ability, encapsulating the items that make your family or team unique, and then run with it.”

“Values tell us and others what is important to us – as leaders, as an organization, and as individuals.”

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.” – Mark 10:45

“Truly serving others requires putting ourselves and our desires aside while looking for ways and opportunities to do what is best for others.”

“Mentor leaders desire to help those they are privileged to lead to be better in whatever roles and responsibilities they have.”

“Servant leadership flips the world’s model upside down: leaders who serve – not just when it’s convenient, neat, and acceptable, but when it’s timely, needed, and right.”
“And when everyone else understands that his or her role is also to lift, encourage, and equip – and that all members of the organization are dependent on one another – it becomes clear that nurturing relationships is necessary to the organization’s health.”

CHAPTER 3: THE MATURITY OF A MENTOR LEADER: A LOOK WITHIN

“In order to become an effective mentor leader, in whatever setting, it is important to take a look inside yourself. Identify what drives and motivates you, the areas in which you’re naturally gifted, and the areas that are more challenging and thus will take more self-application to conquer. The ability to take an honest look at yourself and examine who you are—what makes you tick, what makes you do the things you do—is a mark of maturity for a mentor leader.”

“I know, in my own life, such periods of self-examination are not necessarily times I relish. Often they come about at the suggestion of another person—such as my wife, Lauren—when I am struggling through a difficult time or under pressure to make a decision. Ideally, though, this self-examination should be more intentional and regular, not just dictated by the demands of a particular moment.”

“As Coach Noll pointed out to me, every player loves to work on his strengths, but only the great ones work on their weaknesses. Coming to grips with our strengths and our weaknesses is essential to our roles as leaders—and as mentor leaders, in particular—if we hope to have a positive impact to mentor and lead others.”

“Unloving people are unloved people. The people who are hurting people are hurting themselves. Hurt people hurt people.” – Ken Whitten

“I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins.” – Jeremiah 31:34

“If God can forgive and forget all the things you’ve thought, said, and done in your life, shouldn’t you be willing to forgive yourself and forgive other people?”

“If you start making excuses to cut out the things that are important because of urgent circumstances it will become a habit.”

“We may say that something is important to us, but in the end our actions will determines what we mean. And the people we are trying to influence and guide—our family, friends, team members, employees, and others—will measure our influence by the consistency of our actions and words.”

“Denny Green, my boss with the Minnesota Vikings, used to say he would not select the fifty-three best players, but the fifty-three players who gave us the best team.”

“…the primary focus should be on choosing the right players.”
CHAPTER 4: THE MARKS OF A MENTOR LEADER: CHARACTERISTICS THAT MATTER

“Wherever you go, I will go.” – Ruth 1:16

“But the truth is that right actions done for the wrong reason do not help to build the internal quality or character called ‘virtue’, and it is this quality or character that really matters.” – C.S. Lewis

“Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for tis better to be alone than in bad company.” – George Washington

“...bad company corrupts good character” – 1 Corinthians 15:33

“Character is the foundation on which leadership is built.”

“Surprisingly for some, research conducted by the Leadership Research Institute has shown that in times of crisis, people gravitate toward the person of highest character, not necessarily the person who is ‘in charge’ or even the person they believe to be the most competent. Rather, people will tend to build a relationship with and follow the person they view as the most trustworthy, who cares the most, and who is willing to always do the right thing.”

“Character is the glue that bonds solid and meaningful relationships.”

“To be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved.” – George MacDonald

“...four primary trustworthy traits: competence, integrity, security, and authenticity.”

“Mentor leaders are competent.”

“Mentor leaders remain focused on integrity.”

“If the people in your organization can’t rely on you—whether on the big things or the little things—how are they going to follow you?”

“Mentor leaders are secure in their own skin.”

“...mentor leaders need to exhibit confidence. Not a false bravado, but an inner sense of security.”

“Mentor leaders must be authentic.”

“Leadership attributes that I believe are intrinsic to mentor leadership include demonstrating courage; leading by example; keeping others focused on the organization’s vision and mission; exercising and modeling faith; and always being willing to examine and change paradigms.”

“Mentor leaders demonstrate courage and are willing to lead by example.”

“Often mentor leadership means standing side by side with the people we are leading as they face their greatest challenges.”
“Leading by example is a powerful way for mentor leaders to forge strong bonds with the people who follow them. But what kind of example are you setting? Do you take shortcuts that others aren’t allowed to take? Do you have the courage to make—and stand by—decisions that will be criticized? Do you have the courage to make decisions that are in the best interests of those you lead, regardless of what others may think, even if they temporarily stall the short-term progress of the team?”

“Mentor leaders keep the vision and mission out front.”

“Faith, simply stated, is belief put into action. It’s one thing to state a goal and to create a plan for achieving that goal, but do you really believe that your team’s effort, when exerted through that plan, will lead to the desired result?”

“Faith in the vision and mission is important. Faith in the process and preparation to achieve the mission is important.”

“When you are leading, your goal should be to achieve success and significance over the long term, not to be just a flash in the pan.”

“Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.” – Hebrews 11:1

“As leaders, we must lead with confidence in our shared vision and in the future. If we’re not optimistic about what awaits us in the future, no one else will be either.”

“Personal relationships are the fertile soil from which all advancement, all success, all achievement in real life grows.” – Ben Stein

“Mentor leaders are accountable.”

“In addition to knowing the importance of the cause, they also knew that they answered to a leader who had their backs.”

“Being accountable is one of the most important things a leader can do.”

“Nothing is more deflating to morale than to have a poor outcome pinned on someone who doesn’t deserve it.”

“Most of the time, we are only judged on the outcome, whereas the only thing we can control is the process. Make your process the right one and stay true to it.”

“In any event, leaders who are accountable earn the respect of those they lead. Without that respect, they cannot lead for long.”

“The best leaders I’ve found are those who are engaged with the people around them.”

“Mentor leaders understand the importance of being available and approachable.”
“First of all, as your relationships deepen, you will build trust, and your open-door policy will provide an environment in which even more mentoring can occur. Second, as the bonds of friendship grow, the people you lead will grow more committed to you—because it’s clear that your care about them. And the goals that seem worthwhile to you will have value to them. They will go out of their way to help you and the rest of the team succeed.”

“Part of being approachable is staying available emotionally. Jim Zorn, former head coach of the Washington Redskins and long-time quarterback for the Seattle Seahawks said that he picked up a phrase during his career that helped him when the pressure was on: “Act medium.” Jim explained that in football, as in life, it’s easy to be buffeted by the ups and downs of the moment – by our emotions. It’s obvious that we can be shaken by negative moments. We’ve all had negative reactions to bad calls, stresses, and troubles that can cause us to be slow to respond or to make poor decisions. It can happen in good times as well. Jim said that when he was a young quarterback, he tended to dwell on the results of the first half of games. If he played well, he tended to get too high and think, I’ve done my job, and then he would rest on his laurels and not focus as well on the second half. If he played poorly, he would tend to get down on himself and not feel confident that he could play better in the second half. Over time, he learned to put things behind him emotionally – both good and bad – and to stay focused on future performance. Thus, to “act medium” came to mean staying available emotionally – neither too high nor too low, avoiding either extreme.”

“Don’t ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!” – Ruth 1:16-17 “Loyalty”

“Loyalty develops depth in a relationship, which then forges the bonds to hold the relationship firm and fast when storms and challenges come. When mentor leaders demonstrate their loyalty time and time again to those they lead – in both their personal and professional lives, those relationships will be fortified to withstand whatever challenges they face.”

“Proven loyalty, believed and embraced by the people you serve and lead, will go a long way toward unifying your organization into one that can face every challenge – together.”

“I immediately though of Jesus’ parable of the sheep and the shepherd in the Gospel of John, chapter 10. There, Jesus speaks of the difference between a hired hand and a shepherd. When a wolf comes and threatens the flock, the hired hand runs away, leaving the sheep – someone else’s sheep – to fend for themselves. The shepherd, on the other hand, rises to the defense of his sheep. He will die for the sheep, if necessary, because they are his.”

“Character – the fundamental mark of effective leadership. Keep striving to attain it, as well as the other core traits, attributes, and qualities of a mentor leader.”

CHAPTER 5: THE MOMENTS OF A MENTOR LEADER: INFLUENCE AND IMPACT

“Stop complaining and act. Do something to make the situation better.”

“The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches, but to reveal to him his own.” – Benjamin Disraeli
“Tom Landry was referred to as ‘plastic’. You never heard or saw a response from Coach Landry. He seemed stoic and placid, emotionally immovable on the sidelines, and incredibly calm in his demeanor.”

“Tom Landry was the genuine article, a man who lived out the Christian principles he quietly espoused.”

“We all know the amount of time spent is not necessarily an indicator of success.”

“Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little.” – Edmund Burke

“As a mentor leader, you must be aware that you are also a role model.”

“Mentor leadership requires a deliberate decision to get involved in someone else’s life.”

CHAPTER 6: THE MODEL OF A MENTOR LEADER: LIVING THE MESSAGE

“Preach the gospel at all times; when necessary, use words.” – St. Francis of Assisi

“In short, you will be known by what you model for others – through your words, your actions, your faith, and your heart. For eternity.”

“Especially in tough times, people will want to know if your actions measure up with your words and faith.”

“Leading through you words and actions – whether someone’s watching you or not – tells the world who you are, and more important, who you believe God created you to be.”

“When you’re a teacher, you talk when you teach. You don’t talk during the test.”

“If you teach well enough, you really don’t have to worry when the students are taking the test – they are prepared and can take care of themselves.”

“Make sure that your actions mirror your words. If they don’t, there’s no surer way to a credibility gap and resulting crisis of confidence for those who follow you.”

“Be the role model that God created you to be for others.”

“Be the message that God intended for you to be to all of the world.”

“As I live my life, seeking to be a good role model and exercising mentor leadership, I hope that others can see my faith at work and have it affect their faith as well.”

“And because my players had seen me remain calm in those tough situations, they were willing to listen at halftime when I said, ‘It’s still our time!’”

“Frankly, when you’re in a crisis, it’s too late to try to get people to follow you – unless you have already demonstrated faith and confidence in non-crisis times.”
“...in times of crisis people follow those with character. Not competence or authority, but character. It would be nice to have all three, of course, but if you have to choose which quality to build on, make sure you have impeccable character.”

“When Hume was asked if he was going to hear the charismatic Whitefield preach because he believed what Whitefield believed, he replied, ‘No, but HE does!’”

“Faith is the foundation and strength of the mentor leader, the guiding principle behind everything we do.”

“Mentor leaders will be known by their legacy. The legacy we leave is a composite of the many things that guide the daily steps of the mentor leader.”

“Relationships. Impact. Involvement. Character. Faith. Actions. When all those traits combine with the mindset of a mentor leader, lives will be changed for the better.”

“Looking for lives to change and hearts to impact, that we might model the message of the mentor leader, leaving a legacy of changed lives and a better world, day by day, one life at a time.”

CHAPTER 7: THE MEANS OF A MENTOR LEADER: MAXIMIZING TEAM PERFORMANCE

“The secret is to work less as individuals and more as a team. As a coach, I play not my eleven best, but my best eleven.” – Knute Rockne

“The great law of culture is: Let each become all that he was created capable of being.” – Thomas Carlyle

“The culture you create permeates everything you touch.”

“The question is, are you really sending a message to a star player who isn’t working hard by cutting a less talented player who is doing everything he’s been asked?”

“We need leaders of inspired idealism, leaders to whom are granted great visions, who dream greatly and strive to make their dreams come true; who can kindle the people with the fire from their own burning souls.” – Theodore Roosevelt

“The fundamental keys to the culture of any organization can only be achieved when everyone is on the same page.”

“Differences among the team will enhance its drive for success.”

“God created us each with different talents, abilities, and strengths.”

“Because of our differences, we will excel in different ways.”

“It’s the combination of our diverse strengths that makes the team stronger.”

“To be effective mentor leaders, we must do what Jesus taught us to do: We must reach beyond the boundaries that separate us and connect with people who are different from us.”
“Truly value others.”

“Don’t see yourself as above service.”

“See yourself as an ambassador for God.”

“A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.” – Ecclesiastes 4:12

“View yourself as ‘important, but not indispensable’.”

“If you and your team are truly in it together, you won’t find yourself in the situation where it’s ‘my way or the highway’.”

“When done right, mentor leadership is an ongoing process of leading and being led, of developing ourselves and developing future leaders. My dad always told me that the two easiest ways to grow were to listen to other people and to read.”

“C.S. Lewis figured it out long before I did. In The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, the third book of his Chronicles of Narnia, which was written to illustrate matters of life and faith, Lewis mentions the critical tie between books and life. In a climactic scene in which Eustace confronts a dragon but doesn’t know what it is, Lewis interjects, ‘Edmund or Lucy or you would have recognized it at once, but Eustace had read none of the right books.’”

“Plans go wrong for lack of advice; many advisers bring success.” – Proverbs 15:22

“Mockers hate to be corrected, so they stay away from the wise. A glad heart makes a happy face; a broken heart crushes the spirit. A wise person is hungry for knowledge, while the fool feeds on trash.” – Proverbs 15:12-14

“The mercenaries will always beat the draftees, but the volunteers will crush them both.” – Chuck Noll

“To succeed as a mentor leader, put other people first.”

CHAPTER 8: THE METHODS OF A MENTOR LEADER: THE SEVEN E’S OF ENHANCING POTENTIAL

“Blessed is the leader who seeks the best for those he serves.” – Author Unknown

“Teamwork doesn’t tolerate the inconvenience of distance.” – Author Unknown

“If you do not engage with those you serve, you will never understand them or know enough about them to be able to have a positive effect in their lives.”

“Mentor leaders walk alongside the people they lead – and they love every step. They spend time with their teams and find ways to understand each member.”

“...build communication and foster engagement. Keep an open-door policy.”
A true open door policy is a matter of attitude and approachability...

As a leader, what kind of atmosphere have you created? Do you have an open door policy, but no one ever comes to your office?

Whether intentionally or unintentionally, have you created an aura of detachment?

Tom demonstrated his connection to his players by dressing for practice and running drills with them, as many college basketball coaches do.

Stay engaged. It’s a sign of a great mentor leader.

Good teachers help every student earn an A. – Wilbur Dungy

Through it all, Sam taught us and put each of us in a position to do what we did best, without any concern for whether he received credit – which is exactly what a leader is supposed to do.

Chan Gailey has twice been named a head coach in the NFL, and he has served as offensive coordinator for several other teams. But one of his most fascinating coaching ideas was one he implemented a few years ago as head coach at Georgia Tech: He required his freshman players to take a leadership course from him for thirty minutes a week during their first semester. This was in addition to their regular classroom course load – which at Tech is no small matter – and their football meetings and practices. He believed that those players would eventually be leading his team, ‘and after that our country.’ Wanting them to start thinking about what it means to be a leader, he made sure that his leadership course was an integral part of their Georgia Tech education. Chan wanted to ensure, from the earliest moment possible, that he was helping to train the next generation of leaders – for their own benefit, for the benefit of the team and the school, as well as for the nation.

Our job as a coaching staff is to show you what to do and how to do it. Your job as players is to do it consistently. – Chuck Noll

Leaving the game plan is a sign of panic, and panic is not in our game plan.” – Chuck Noll

“We won’t adjust; we won’t adapt. We will do what we do best and make our opponent adjust.” – Chuck Noll

“...stubbornness is only a virtue if you’re right. When you’re wrong, it’s just another character flaw. His genius was in knowing when he was right.”

Correction does much, but encourage does more.” – Goethe

Mentor leaders care. Mentor leaders lift others up. Mentor leaders encourage.”

“...encouragement is one aspect of leadership that you can’t delegate.”

“...it’s not just in tough situations that people need encouragement. Even when things are going smoothly, it’s important to build people up.”

Finally, after I had reviewed a game during a long winning streak, one of our veteran players asked me, ‘Will we ever play a game where you’re satisfied?’ I was extremely satisfied with how they were playing. The only problem was they didn’t know it. It was a lesson I tried to remember from then on. Everyone needs encouragement, even when things are going well.”

As a mentor leader, you’re probably better off overusing encouragement than underusing it.”
“I needed to communicate better because even a person as self-confident as Warren Sapp needed affirmation and encouragement.”

“As we look ahead...leaders will be those who empower others.” – Bill Gates

“He made sure his teams were so well prepared that he didn’t have to constantly direct them while they were playing.”

“That is true empowerment: preparation followed by appropriate freedom.”

“The players totally believed in the system, and it was self-policing. As Warren described it, if he wasn’t focused on the practice field or in the weight room as a freshman, an upperclassman was there to rectify the problem. The older players took it upon themselves to educate and equip him until they could trust that he wouldn’t let the team down. The coaches didn’t even have to get involved.”

“Dwight White, the great Steelers defensive lineman, played in all four of the Steelers’ Super Bowl wins of the late 1970’s. He almost missed the first one against the Vikings, however, as he was hospitalized all week with pneumonia, complicated by pleurisy. He lost eighteen pounds that week but still emerged to play in the game on a cold, slippery turf field in New Orleans. Coach Noll was prepared to play without Dwight, but Dwight wouldn’t hear of it. In fact, he scored Pittsburgh’s first points in a Super Bowl by sacking Fran Tarkenton for a safety and the 2-0 halftime lead that the Steelers would never relinquish. And then he went back into the hospital after the game. No one wanted to let the team down.”

“Sherm knew of Jim’s ‘act medium’ mantra, and he told him he hadn’t lived up to it. He hadn’t maximized his own performance, and by his behavior he had hurt his team’s chances to win the game. Jim had been totally unavailable to those who were counting on him; in fact, Sherm had taken his headset off on three separate occasions because of Jim’s barking.”

“At some point, a mentor leader must turn others loose to do their jobs.”

“Great leaders energize and inspire those they lead. Even as they face their own daily struggles and stresses, mentor leaders look for ways to energize and motivate the people around them.”

“Energize. Inspire. Motivate. The mentor leader does this – intentionally.”

“Teamwork: Simply stated, it is less me and more we.” – Author Unknown

“...the ultimate goal of every mentor leader is to build other leaders.”

“...elevation is raising people up.”

“...raising up leaders is the truly selfless goal of every mentor leader, the culmination of focusing on others. To elevate your followers means to help them reach their God-given potential, even if it means preparing them to replace you.”

“...it was part of my job to help all my assistants develop and move on.”

“...I could see a quiet, determined confidence that allowed him to lead without being overbearing.”

“As a mentor leader, the success of the people you’ve elevated is what you like to see. It’s not about getting the credit; it’s about helping the organization, and everyone in it, be the best they can be. If you’ve been building leaders all around you, then the organization certainly shouldn’t fall apart when you leave.”
“Engage, educate, equip, encourage, empower, energize, and elevate. These are the methods for maximizing the potential of any individual, team, organization, or institution for ultimate success and significance. These are the methods of a mentor leader.”

“Be engaged with those you lead in order for them to trust that you care and want to believe in you. Leadership is a ‘contact’ sport.”

“Help every team member earn an A. Educate them for success.”

“Equip those you lead. Create an environment and provide the resources and the proper tools – physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional – for the team to be successful.”

“Take every opportunity to encourage the people you lead. When in doubt, do it. Then do it again.”

“Once your team is ready, stop teaching and let them ‘take the test’. Empower them by letting them go.”

“Energize your team’s efforts by believing in them. The energy to go forward and the inspiration to achieve will come from you.”

“Develop your team members as leaders. The mentor leader’s ultimate goal is to build leaders who will leave to lead elsewhere, or who will be elevated to fill the mentor leader’s role.”

CHAPTER 9: THE MEASURE OF A MENTOR LEADER – BUILDING OTHER LIVES OF IMPACT

“... the mentor leader adds value to the lives of others, to make the lives of other people better.”

“...the success of a mentor leader can be measured with things of significance: lives of impact, lives that are better because of your leadership.”

“And let me encourage you to start right where you are, with the people right around you, doing something as simple as engaging with them and talking. Sometimes the smallest things we do have the biggest impact. Just start!”

“The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit.” – Nelson Henderson

“...use college sports to get my degree, to set myself up for the future, and to make friends and build relationships.”

“Some mentoring relationships last for years and result in deep friendships. Others can happen in a moment of sharing the wisdom of your experience with someone standing right before you. The key is to look for opportunities and be ready to act.”

“...when you’re the leader, not everyone will be happy with your decisions.”

“John’s disciples came to him and said, ‘Rabbi, the man you met on the other side of the Jordan River, the one you identified as the Messiah, is also baptizing people. And everybody is going to him instead of coming to us.’ John replied, ‘No one can receive anything unless God gives it from heaven. You yourselves know how plainly I told you, ‘I am not the Messiah. I am only here to prepare the way for him. It’s the bridegroom who marries the bride, and the best man is simply glad to stand with him and hear his vows. Therefore, I am filled with joy at his success. He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.’” – John 3:26-30
“But releasing those around us to other leaders who might serve them better is one of the things we have to evaluate. If mentor leadership is about adding value to the lives of others, about making them better, shouldn’t we always evaluate what is best for them and when necessary help them to find better opportunities?”

“Mentor leaders should always look to add value to the lives of others, even if it means delegating authority to those they have mentored who are ready to be elevated to new levels of leadership responsibility.”

“…we can’t fall into the trap of only looking to the father as a possible mentor. It can’t always be the teachers, the coaches, the supervisors, or the parents who are leading. Sometimes it has to be the older brother/sister – and all of us can fill that role at some time. We all have a role in leadership. We all can mentor. We all can create lives of value and create ‘coaching trees’ of people whose lives we have affected.”

“…we always have time. We always have a platform. There is always someone whose life we can affect – even if we’re not aware at the time that we’re doing it.”

“Usually we don’t get a letter telling us of the eternal impact that one moment of your life has had. But that doesn’t mean those moments don’t happen, and it doesn’t mean that a moment here, or fifteen minutes there, or even years of patient mentoring won’t pay off down the road in ways we can’t anticipate. So we press on, with faith in things unseen, knowing that God walks with us and before us, guiding our steps as we use every opportunity to change lives around us. Who knows which life will be different – for all eternity? It very possibly could depend on us.”

“The mentor leader’s ultimate measure of success is simply this: Did you add value to the lives of others?”

“Regardless of ‘wins’ and ‘losses’, you have succeeded as a mentor leader if you have improved the lives of those you lead and of others who are affected by you and your ‘coaching tree‘”.  

“Always be willing to find the right place for someone to serve, knowing that God has uniquely equipped every person with incredible gifts and abilities.”

“Prepare yourself to hand off your leadership to someone else who is ready to be elevated. Be ready to enlist the help of others, and then to call them out when needed.”

“There is always someone whose life you can affect for good. Do it!”

“It’s not about us; it’s about everything that God can do THROUGH us, for others.”

“At the end of it all, if even one life is better because we lived, our lives have significance.”