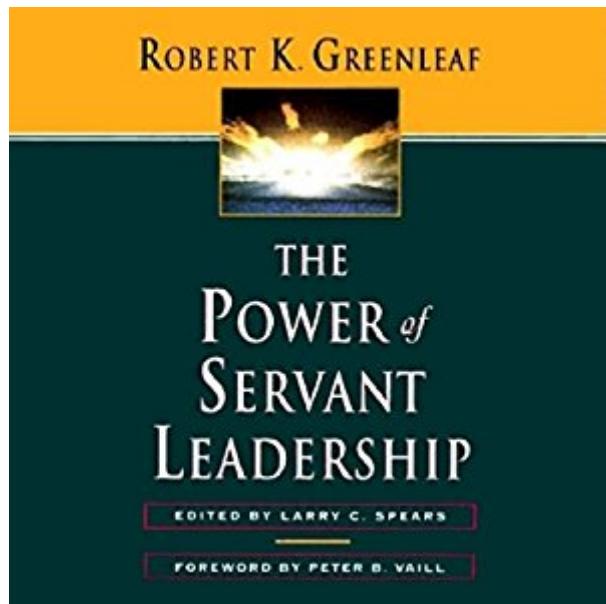


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The Power Of Servant Leadership



Synopsis

During the last decade, we have witnessed an unparalleled explosion of interest in the practice of "servant-leadership," as today's business leaders search for a new leadership model for the 21st century. Based on the seminal work of Robert K. Greenleaf, a former AT&T executive who coined the term almost 30 years ago, servant-leadership emphasizes an emerging approach to leadershipâ "one which puts serving others, including employees, customers, and community, first. In fact, Greenleaf's work, including his bestselling *Servant-Leadership*, has become increasingly popular since his death in 1990 and continues to inspire a growing movement of people and organizations concerned with issues of leadership, management, service, and spirit. *The Power of Servant Leadership* is a collection of nine of Greenleaf's most compelling essays on servant-leadership. These essays, published together in one volume for the first time, contain many of Greenleaf's best insights into the nature and practice of servant-leadership and show his continual refinement of the servant-as-leader concept. In addition, several of the essays focus on the related issues of spirit, commitment to vision, and wholeness. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Introductory Summary: The editor of this book is Larry C. Spears who at the time of this writing is the CEO of the Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership since 1990. The foundation for this book is grounded in the person of Robert K. Greenleaf who is the father of Servant Leadership Theory.

Back in 1970, he wrote a small essay called "The Servant As Leader", which introduced the term "servant-leadership". That and other writings have influenced an entire generation of management experts and institutional leaders. Bob Greenleaf (1904-1990) spent his first career in management research, development and education at AT&T. After retirement, he began a second career teaching and consulting at institutions ranging from Harvard Business School to the Ford Foundation to scores of churches and not-for-profit institutions. During the tumultuous 1960s, Greenleaf tried to understand why so many young people were in rebellion against America's institutions, especially universities. He concluded that the fault lay with the institutions: they weren't doing a good job of serving; therefore, they were doing a poor job of leading. In 1970, Greenleaf wrote "The Servant as Leader", a powerful little essay that continues to gain influence today. In it, Greenleaf described some of the characteristics and activities of servant-leaders, providing examples which show that individual efforts, inspired by vision and a servant ethic, can make a substantial difference in the quality of society. Greenleaf said true leaders are chosen by their followers. He discussed the skills necessary to be a servant-leader; the importance of awareness, foresight and listening; and the contrasts between coercive, manipulative, and persuasive power. This book is a collection of eight essays by Robert Greenleaf, most of which were originally published as separate pamphlets by The Greenleaf Center.^[1] The editor makes it clear that as an aid to the reader, the eight essays in this volume are as follows:

- "Servant: Retrospect and Prospect" - Greenleaf presents the need in this reflection of how fresh vision is needed that liberates people within a variety of institutions and organizations from rigid mind-sets.
- "Education and Maturity" - Personal identity and personal significance is developed over the journey of a life time as one grows in understanding of maturity.
- "The Leadership Crisis" - The source of the crisis in Greenfield's reflection is the definition and limitation of three types of power. Vision is the necessary sail that gives guidance to the effective use of power in the life of an institution or organization.
- "Have you a Dream Deferred?" - This reflection focuses on the understanding of leadership to place the responsibility for personal growth of people within an institution and organization back onto the people they lead.
- "The Servant as Religious Leader" - From the perspective of the organization it is not simply tasks that must get done but in the midst of tasks recognizing the phenomenon of "spirit" - we must get people done by leaders holding their own against the forces of destruction and indifference.
- "Seminary as Servant" - Greenleaf presents how seminaries can have the courage to present a vision by which they focus on serving society.
- "My Debt to E.B. White" - The essay presents how E.B. White's writings

impacted Greenleaf's thinking over fifty-five years. Two of White's gifts: "seeing things whole" and "the gift of language to express what he saw" were foundational to his power as a writer.¹ *Old Age: The Ultimate Test of the Spirit*² In this essay Greenleaf begins to unpack the wisdom that he has developed over a lifetime of experience and reflection. This is a wonderful chapter for anyone who is preparing to transition into midlife.

Points of Discovery and Reflection This reader has discovered after reading numerous articles and essays written by Greenleaf one must take time to reflect on three questions that will allow the reader to process Greenleaf's transformative leadership theory. These questions are: How does one understand the need for people to be integrated in their approach to life and work? In essence productivity is the outcome of one's way of being.^[2] In a New York Times article Greenleaf states, "Servant leadership deals with the reality of power in everyday life" its legitimacy, the ethical restraints upon it and the beneficial results that can be attained through the appropriate use of power.^[3] It is refreshing that Greenleaf does not approach the concept of power as being inherently evil which has been made common by some cultural definitions in the flow of the American mindset. For Greenleaf, it is the proper stewardship of power by both leaders and the people that they lead that create a context for the development of healthy maturity and wholeness in their lives that makes a positive impact in society. The second question one must reflect upon relates to "how one views their own sense of personal identity?"⁴ If transformation is to occur in the lives that one leads it must be happening in the life of the leader. All ten of the foundational characteristics of servant-leadership theory are grounded on the bedrock of this core truth. Ridged mind-sets in organizations find cannot be hurdled by a leader who is not aware of their own capacity for a ridged mind-set. Thus, this leader will not have the courage to present a vision that persuades people consider a different path to an issue. The third question that one must reflect upon is, "How does one view other people?"⁵ In each one of these essays you as a reader will be constantly challenged to be more committed to the growth and success of those you serve as a leader rather than your own success.

Thoughts for the Journey One of the criticisms that leadership scholars have levied at servant-leadership theory is that there is not enough empirical research that support the productivity of an organization implementing this approach to leadership. In the past ten years that has changed and what is occurring is that there is some cross-over with this theory along with family systems theory that is making some deep impact into the productivity in industry as well as in the context of globalization. In reading this book I would recommend that you journal your thoughts around the three questions that were presented in the previous section of this summary. This is a great read

and this reader highly recommends that you take the time to glean from Robert K. Greenleaf in order to equip you with a different vision for yourself and others on your journey.[1] The Power of Servant Leadership, (San Francisco, CA: Berrett Koeler, 1998). p 20.[2] Ibid, p 5.[3] Ibid, p 5. (Referring to New York Times (October 2,

1990) _____ The Power of Servant Leadership.

San Francisco, CA: Berrett Koeler, 1998. Paperback, 313 pages Published January 1st 1998 by Berrett-Koehler Publishers original title The Power of Servant Leadership ISBN 1576750353 (ISBN13: 9781576750353) flag

Good read

Essence of a service-oriented person: serve others.

Servant leadership is the only way forward

Great

This book is timeless and very appropriate for today's organization's servant leaders. Practical, step by step tips on practicing and evolving as a servant leader. Easy read, easy to follow. Makes sense!

Clear and easy to read. The message is strong and material well documented.

Excellent book for illustrating the concept of being a leader who maximizes his/her employees' abilities and capabilities.

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