

## A Leadership Revolution?

By Bob Young

Orrin Woodward and Chris Brady's book, *Launching a Leadership Revolution*, may revolutionize your view of leadership. Even better, it could revolutionize your leadership style and ability. The authors provide helpful insights for leadership in any area in this well researched, easy to read volume. The authors became known first through their partnership in building a community of Internet entrepreneurs. This book shares some of the lessons they have learned. The essence of the book is seen in the subtitle: "mastering the five levels of influence".

John Maxwell notes that leadership is influence. Max DePree (*Leadership is an Art*) reminds us that leadership is an art rather than a science. Leadership is personal, not mechanical. The loss of influence is the loss of leadership. In a world where leadership is often identified with decisions, authority, power, and control, the kind of leadership Jesus talks about is often lost. Secular concepts of leadership too easily find their way into the thinking and actions of spiritual leaders in local churches. Roxburgh and Romanuk (*Missional Leader*) write that trust is built by the leader's character, credibility, and authenticity. They describe character as personal habits, skills, and behaviors that engender confidence and credibility. In the contemporary world (and church), the need for leaders with integrity, character, and authenticity is often lost. As a result, we face a serious cultural problem in basic distrust of leaders at every level.

Stephen Covey followed his seven habits with an entire book devoted to the eighth habit: empowerment. Covey maintains that what distinguishes effective leaders is the willingness and the ability to empower others. Empowering leadership lets others make decisions and have authority and control. Effective leaders have learned the art of delegation which maintains accountability. Maxwell (*Developing the Leaders Around You*) says effective leadership development demands knowing how to choose leaders, how to grow them by investing in them, and how to empower them by wise delegation and effective counsel.

Maxwell (*Developing the Leaders Around You*) lists five levels of leadership. These represent styles or types of leadership, ordered from lowest to highest: positional, permission, production, people-developing, personhood affirming. A similar list which has some correlation to Maxwell's list appears in Collins (*Good to Great*). Collins charts levels of capability, contribution to the team, competent management, effective leadership of others, and executive leadership.

Woodward and Brady's five levels of influence reflect the nature of leadership, and the great leadership need in today's church. Effective leaders with the capacity to revolutionize an organization go through these stages: learning, performing, leading, developing leaders, developing leaders who will develop other leaders.

Where do you see your own leadership development? How aware are you of the levels of influence? What about the leaders in the church where you are a member? I fear that in

too many churches we have leaders who are mostly doers (performing), with minimal abilities to involve and lead others. Few are the congregations where leaders are developing other leaders, even fewer those where leadership development focuses on developing leaders to develop other leaders. Yet Paul's instruction to Timothy (2 Tim. 2:2) suggests just such a model: share with those who will share with others so that the others can share with even more. Our failure in understanding the levels of leadership is also our problem in ministry and evangelism.