

Leading to Make a Difference

Activity:	Duration
Dinner and Fellowship	45 Minutes
Teach the lesson "Lead with Courage."	50 Minutes
Discussion of the application guide for <i>The Next Generation Leader</i>	50 Minutes
Reporting of interviews with a leader	45 Minutes
JMen is ending... Next Steps	30 Minutes
Prayer Time	20 Minutes

Leader Notes:

1. The five points of the **Lesson** on *Lead with Courage* build upon each other. Teach them as a connected group of thoughts, not an independent list of principles. The goal is to make a challenge at the end by asking each guy to determine what "step" of courage God is asking them to take as a leader. The step may be related to one of the five points or something more specific to their current life circumstance. Press in on the idea that if they are not facing the challenge of their next big step, they may well not be leading up to their potential. Leadership never stays static.
2. When you lead them through the **Application Guide** on *The Next Generation Leader*, guide them to one or two key points they will apply to their lives.
3. Take some time for the guys to discuss the highlights of their **interview with a leader**. What they learned and what they will apply. Some guys may tell about a negative characteristic that they would not practice. This should not be the focus and not be repeated outside the confines of this learning environment. Take a quick moment to pray for all the leaders that were interviewed.
4. **JMen is ending**. What's next? Take some time to reflect over the year and ask the men to identify one/two significant themes or specific issues God has brought to the surface as a catalyst for their growth. Then, talk about the next steps — what will they do with what they have learned and how they have grown?
Talk about their future leadership roles in their home, business, and ministry.
5. In the prayer time, be sure to pray a prayer of blessing over each man.
6. **Special Project for Month 12:** the project is a party with the guys and their spouses. Confirm the date and plans for the Celebration Night dinner next month.

Lesson

Lead with Courage!

Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Joshua 1:6–7

I have learned there is a difference between courage and stupidity.

Insert illustration

The Truth about Courage

1. Courage is not the absence of fear.

Fear is often a God-given emotion that protects us from harm.

2. Courage is not reserved for the highly gifted and talented.

We all face fears in our own context. The circumstances that life brings our way and the grace that God provides. It is common for the meek and quiet to be quite courageous.

Insert illustration

Courage lifts the hearts of people...
...helps them believe they can do it too.

3. Courage turns dreams into reality.

Insert illustration

4. Courage is found in everyday matters, not only in heroic moments.

- *Tell the truth*
- *Do the right thing*
- *Courageousness builds upon itself as you gain confidence, wisdom, and favor*

Five Demonstrations of Courage to Strengthen Your Leadership

1. The courage to accept your **limitations**.

Truth is, I have limitations, and so do you.

You're good, but you're not *that* good.

Remember your first job? (Ask several guys to take one minute to tell about their first real job and now, looking back, what they didn't know and couldn't do)

It's tough to admit when we are weak, but that is where we find our strength.

Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
II Corinthians 12:8–10

Most of us are ordinary people — who can do extraordinary things because of God's kindness and favor.

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.
Ephesians 3:20–21

God desires your sincere and consistent confession of dependency upon His favor, power, and strength.

The truth is:

- *You can lead your business with God or without Him. Spirit or Flesh.*
- *You can lead your family with God or without Him. Spirit or Flesh.*
- *You can lead a church with God or without Him. Spirit or Flesh.*

Courageous leadership first requires that you are a courageous follower.

Submission (humility) is at the core of the followership God wants from you.

- Submission prevents a spirit of **arrogance**.
 - *"I know more than she does"... I'm smarter, faster, and have more experience.
Maybe, but there is a reason they're the boss and you aren't.*Arrogance blinds you to the truth.
- Submission prevents a spirit of **rebellion**.
Rebellion is in our nature! We must choose submission.
 - *No parent ever taught a three-year-old to lie! But they do!*
- Submission prevents a spirit of **independence**.
God never intended for us to be independent in life but dependent on Him and interdependent on others.

Knowing and accepting your limitations as a leader sets you up to inherit tremendous strength and authority when you give them to Christ.

2. The courage to face **current Reality**.

Tell a recent story in your life that requires courage. Remember, it doesn't have to be big or dramatic.

Let's be honest; sometimes, Reality is tough on us.

- *Over 30? Not the athlete you once were.*

Reality can be discouraging.

- *Stand on the scale — I weigh how much?!?*

Reality beats up our ego.

Dealing with Reality requires hard work.

You can deny it, but you can't make it go away

- *Your bank accounts — business, home*
- *Business owner...Company not performing*
- *Sales and you aren't hitting the mark*
- *Your kids aren't the perfect angels you thought they would be...*

- *You aren't the man of character you aspire to be...*

Followers make excuses...leaders face Reality.

*** If you don't define Reality and face Reality, you can't change Reality.

"A leader's first responsibility is to define reality."

Max Dupree — Leadership Is An Art

- Give those close to you permission, to be honest.
- Do you have people who can be honest with you?
- Don't pretend that everything is great when it is not.
- Don't look the other way when you know there is a problem.
- Be courageous and ask the tough questions
- Don't exaggerate the positive to cover the negative.
- Embrace the truth as an opportunity for growth, not a personal attack.
- Seek God's wisdom and write your plan to change your Reality.

Be relentless in your pursuit of knowing the truth about what is happening around you.

"Confront the brutal facts."

Jim Collins — Good to Great

3. The courage to **stand alone.**

What does this look like?

- The courage to make **tough decisions**

What is the most difficult decision you've ever made?

You can track your leadership development by keeping a journal of your tough decisions.

- *Stay in a tough marriage*
 - *First-person in family to become a Christian*
 - *Let someone go from their job*
 - *Quit a good job for reasons people didn't understand*
 - *Surrender to Jesus and the Cross*
- The courage to **say no.**

*"Opportunity does not equal obligation."
Andy Stanley — The Next Generation Leader*

Context of the quote: Too many things distract from the one that counts.

Learning focus is essential.

"Most of us lead busy, but undisciplined lives. We have ever-expanding to-do lists, trying to build momentum by doing, doing, doing — and doing more. And it rarely works. Those who built the good-to-great companies, however, made as much use of 'stop doing' lists as the to-do lists. They displayed a remarkable discipline to unplug all sorts of extraneous junk... they displayed remarkable courage to channel their resources into only one or a few arenas."

Jim Collins — Good to Great

The same principle holds true for you.

Who of you can do everything?

1. We worry about pleasing people — we don't want to disappoint them.
 - *You lay awake at night worrying about what they think while they sleep*
2. Refusing to say no eventually robs you of your ability to lead successfully from your sweet spot.
 - *"I can't say no to my boss." Yes, you can. You just can't say it often, so make sure it's for a good reason.*
3. Don't let the Good opportunity rob you of the God opportunity that has the greatest potential.

What do you need to say no to?

- *Business deal*
- *Large purchase*
- *Don't be afraid to say no to a new ministry. Your church can't do everything...*
- The courage to **step out** before anyone else does.
 - *It's easy to vote in a meeting after everyone else does.
Voting first is tough.*

4. The courage to **never give up**.

- Sometimes it takes courage to never give up in the **fight** for the goal.

Insert illustration

- Sometimes it takes courage to never give up in the **wait** for God's timing.

When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him (Moses)." Exodus 32:1

Aaron cracked under pressure. Don't crack under pressure.

- *Discussion with the group...What Pressure Are You Under?*

Don't give up... it's worth it.

- Sometimes it takes courage to never give up in your willingness to be **bold** when required.

5. The courage to take **risks** for the sake of progress

We will take risks for things that are important to us.

Insert illustration

God doesn't call you to take foolish risks but to think through and pray through risks.

Fear is conquered when you take the first step.

Not all fear, but enough to allow you to trust God and start moving.

Insert illustration

What step does God want you to take?

"The ultimate measure of a person is not where they stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where they stand at times of challenge and controversy."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The question is not: "How do I eliminate fear?"

But: "How do I possess the courage God has for me?"

Application Guide

Next Generation Leader

Andy Stanley

Section 1 Competence — Do Less, Accomplish More

1. Do you lean toward achieving balance in your life or mastering focus? Why? Do you attempt to achieve both? Is this working? Do you think achieving both is possible?

It's long been said and well understood that leaders control their schedules rather than letting others control it.

Let's establish some context for understanding. As a younger leader, or a leader new to a company or type of business, you rarely have the privilege of focusing only on the lanes of work within your passion and gifting. Unless you own your own business, you have a boss, and they will direct much of your time. (If you own your own business and remember the early days, you likely didn't have freedom then to do only what your passions and giftings focused on either.)

If you serve well in the areas you have been given, your gifts, strengths and passions will be noticed and over time you'll get to do what you're passionate about. Don't get frustrated by the journey.

Here's some advice that will serve you well. First, **build** (grow it, make it better) the area you have been given, and **enjoy** your work! Learn and grow as a leader, figure out what your lanes are (your sweet spot of productive strengths), and work toward that. It takes

many years, can be decades, to fully get there. (If you work for a boss who doesn't care or in an unhealthy culture, make a change.)

Remember, even a seasoned leader, working almost exclusively in their sweet spot, will have requirements of their time. The point is to head in the right direction, the direction of your lanes of gifting and passion that God designed within you -- the work in which you are most productive and have the greatest joy.

2. What percentage would you say you are working in your sweet spot, and do you feel you are on pace in this process with your level of experience in your field of business? (explain)

3. What do you need to do to move a little closer to your lane(s) of passion and gifting? (this is not a quick-fix question or answer)

4. Is the environment you work in conducive to your growth as a leader, and does it allow you to eventually lead according to your strengths?

Section 3 Clarity — Uncertainty Demands Clarity

1. Great Chapter! How true it is when Andy said: "The more responsibility you assume as a leader, the more uncertainty you will be expected to manage."

And this quote is true as well: "This is the tension every good leader lives with: negotiating uncertain terrain while casting a clear and compelling vision." *Andy Stanley*

Give a brief illustration of a leader you have chosen to follow who does a good job managing this tension of being clear in direction while negotiating uncertain terrain.

2. "As leaders, we can afford to be uncertain, but we cannot afford to be unclear." *Andy Stanley*

Can you give an illustration of your leadership at home or work that shows you mastering this leadership principle? Jot down a brief note — and tell us about it.

3. "Uncertainty exposes a lack of knowledge. Pretending exposes a lack of character."
Andy Stanley

Do you permit yourself to admit what you don't know? (Describe)

"Coaches measure their success by the number of points on the scoreboard, not the number of plays they successfully execute." *Andy Stanley*

Keep your eyes on the big picture. Of the big picture wins below, circle the ones you are doing well in and make a brief note of action where you need to improve.

Home:

- Love and serve your wife
- Confident and emotionally healthy kids
- Family knows & loves Jesus
- Family enjoys time together (especially you and your wife.)
- Solve conflict well

Work:

- Success and advancement
- Great relationships with co-workers
- Servant leadership
- Leading staff well
- Direction and strategy are clear

Ministry:

- Demonstrate a servant's heart
- Using my spiritual gifts
- Good team player
- Enjoy my ministry
- Seeing changed lives

Section 4 Coaching — Coaching Enables a Leader to Go Farther, Faster

1. Answer these two questions from your work environment.

- Who is (are) your coach(es)? What are you learning, and how are you improving?

- Who are you coaching? How is this person growing?

2. Ask your wife these questions. (Just a conversation with your wife)

- Am I teachable?
- Do I listen well?
- Do I put into practice what I learn?

3. (Back to you) Good coaches observe, instruct, and inspire. Which of these three is your strength, and which is your weakness? Briefly describe.

Section 5 Character — Character Determines the Leader's Legacy

1. One more question to ask your wife.

In what ways do you respect my character?

- 2.** In refusing to compromise, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego gained moral authority and influence with the king.

As we draw near the end of our year together, it's wise to ask a tough question: Is there anything in your life that, if continued (or lack thereof), will cause your moral authority to be in jeopardy? If so, what?

- 3.** What is your personal definition of success?

As a leader, what legacy are you determined to leave behind?