

The phrase “servant leadership” was coined by Robert K. Greenleaf in *The Servant as Leader*, an essay that he first published in 1970.

*“The servant-leader is servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions... The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.”*



– Robert K. Greenleaf



Then he said, “Do you understand what I have done for you? You address me as ‘Teacher’ and ‘Master,’ and rightly so. That is what I am. So if I, the Master and Teacher, washed your feet, you must now wash each other’s feet. I’ve

laid down a pattern for you. What I’ve done, you do. I’m only pointing out the obvious. A servant is not ranked above the master; an employee doesn’t give orders to the employer. If you understand what I’m telling you, act like it—and live a blessed life.” – Jesus, John 13:12-17, MSG

## Servant Leader Characteristics

**Active Listener** – Able to listen to others without interrupting or just waiting for them to stop talking so you can speak. Being in the moment.

Listening on multiple levels = auditory, comprehension, understanding

Ignoring > Pretend Listening > Selective Listening > Attentive Listening > Empathic Listening > Holy Spirit Listening



**Commitment to the Growth of Others** – Focusing on the personal and professional growth of those they lead. Understanding that all people have value beyond just the work they perform.

**Empathy** – Able to understand the feelings of others, without necessarily agreeing with them. Recognize and accept people for their uniqueness and understand their point of view.

**Healing** – Goal of leaving everything better than you found it. Taking a bad situation, and making it better. Helping people with hurts and anger to find healing and joy.

**Awareness** – Strong sense of self-awareness through self-reflection and receiving feedback from others. Understanding and maximizing strengths while minimizing areas of weakness.

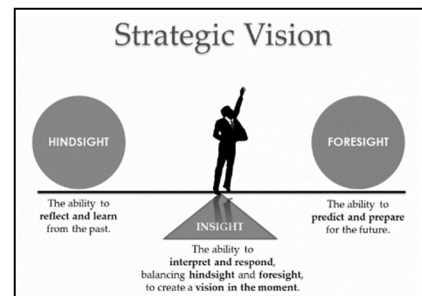
**Persuasion** – Able to convince others without coercing them into compliance. Focusing more on cooperation than authority or abuse of power. Consensus building through sharing of power.

**Vision** – Builds on and celebrates the past, understands the realities of the present, and prepares for the future.

**Conceptualization** – Able to see the “big picture” perspective. Knows when and how to get beyond the day-to-day realities.

**Stewardship** – We are not “owners,” we have been entrusted with all we have from God. The focus must be on the greater good.

**Building Community** – Strengthen relationships at all levels. Looks for ways to build bridges for people to connect with each other, with the church, and with Christ.



## Servant Leadership Self-Assessment

Read each area and then honestly assess yourself on a scale of 1-5.

1 = rarely      2 = sometimes      3 = often      4 = frequently      5 = consistently

	1	2	3	4	5
1. I receive constructive feedback from others without becoming defensive or challenging.					
2. I focus on preparing and empowering others to succeed in their roles.					
3. I am preparing a successor to take my place of leadership when my season is complete.					
4. I am comfortable letting God be the leader and for me to take the role of a servant.					
5. When treated like a servant, I respond like a servant without question or insult.					
6. I strive to lead not out of fear, or to create a sense of fear in those I lead.					
7. When I encounter a negative situation or person I work to make everything better.					
8. I recognize and accept people for their uniqueness and try to understand their point of view.					
9. I listen more than I talk. When others speak to me I listen actively, not waiting to speak.					
10. When things go well—I celebrate the work of others. When things go bad—I look in the mirror to focus on what I could have done better.					

## Practical Examples

- Pray for those you lead by name
- Thank you gatherings / cards / emails
- Notes of appreciation and/or encouragement
- Consistent communication to keep your team informed
- Birthday cards
- Hospital visits – meals when coming home
- Email team when someone on team is struggling and invite prayer
- Follow up within 48 hours if they miss a meeting
- Follow up on prayer concerns
- Take an interest in their family, hobbies, work, etc.
- Find out how to help them grow as leaders
- Honor their time—don't be late with your part
- Find ways to reduce their stress

