

Life Planning: The Trilateral Leadership Ledger

I've recently been reading *"Launching a Leadership Revolution"* by Brady and Woodward. It hit #1 on the Wall Street Journal Business Best Seller list in November - for good reason.

The book breaks new ground in the area of Personal Growth, so I want to encourage you to both buy and it, and start using a tool from it.

A key truth is that "You must rule yourself before you rule others" - this is called self-mastery; before you can "rule" yourself you must know yourself, and most of us live in one or other state of self-deception with blind spots about who and what we truly are. If we clearly see our strengths and weaknesses then we can grow where we need to.

We can only grow personally as long as we are learning; once we stop learning we are in decline. There is no standing still - if we feel we 'are there', we've 'arrived', then we are sliding backwards.

Leadership growth must occur in two areas:

1. Personal
2. Influence (on others)

Let's deal with #1 now and come back to #2 at another time. Personal growth is internal, taking place deep down. Stephen Covey says "Internal victories precede external victories" and it's true to say the effects of personal growth take time to show up.

Three Categories of Personal Effectiveness

Personal Growth needs to take place primarily in 3 areas.

1. Character (who you are)

Many have said that *"who we become is more important than what we achieve"*. There is a major intrinsic value in developing character that transcends but also guarantees results and improved performance in life and in work. *"Mastering one's future must surely start with managing one's self"*. *"Self-control is absolutely vital in any endeavor of life. Influential leaders are the ones who devote themselves to personal discipline and make the most of their gifts."* Character is foundational to everything else.

2. Tasks - work (what you do, what you achieve, and how you do it)

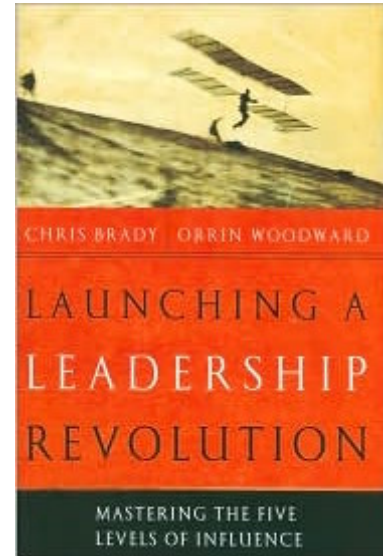
The ability to get things done is crucial. Some of us grew up in a home that honored the work ethic. Yitzhak Rabin (2-time Prime Minister of Israel) said of his boyhood *"Our home was permeated with a sense of mission. Work was considered a value in itself."* Too many have not seen this modeled.

3. Relationships (who you help, how you serve)

Our ability to get along with people, to build and maintain long-lasting relationships is key to life and leadership. We cannot achieve much of value alone. The strength of our relationships is determined by the degree to which we invest in them, not for our own benefit, but for the good of others.

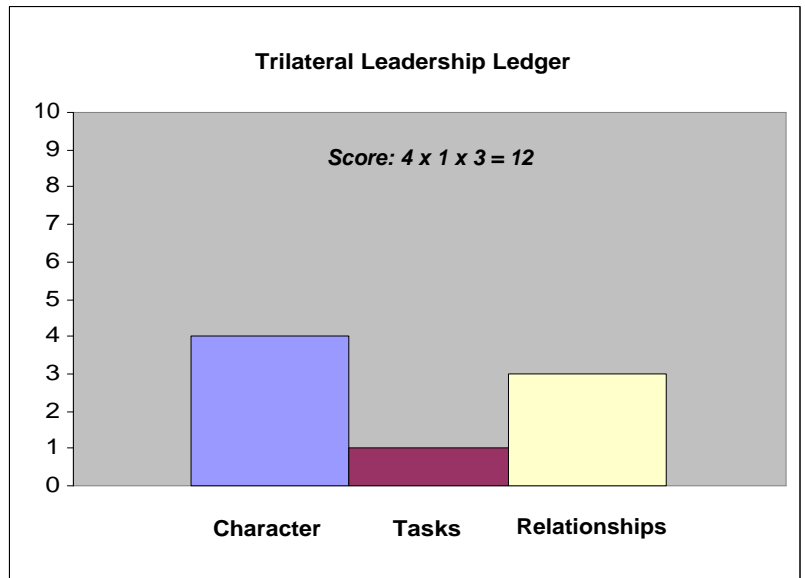
Using The Trilateral Leadership Ledger

We begin with a self assessment which gives us a rating or score on the ledger. Later we'll see how to assess our score, but first let's look at an example. Our scores in each of the 3 areas are multiplied together. The scale for each area is 0 – 10, so the 'perfect' (impossible) score is 1000.



Here (right) is an example of someone with fairly good Character, fair Relationships, but only scoring 1 on Tasks (they don't achieve much).

A total score of 12 is not too good!

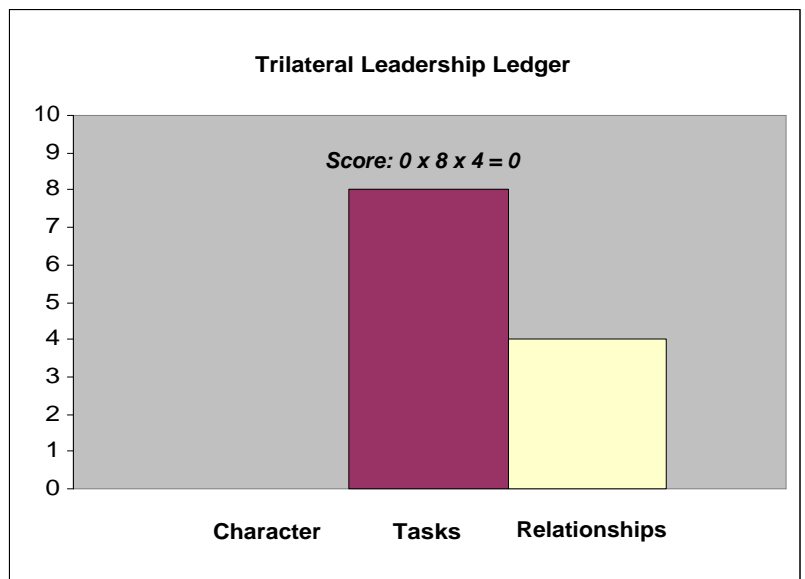


If someone scores well in two areas but zero in one, look what happens.

Ouch!

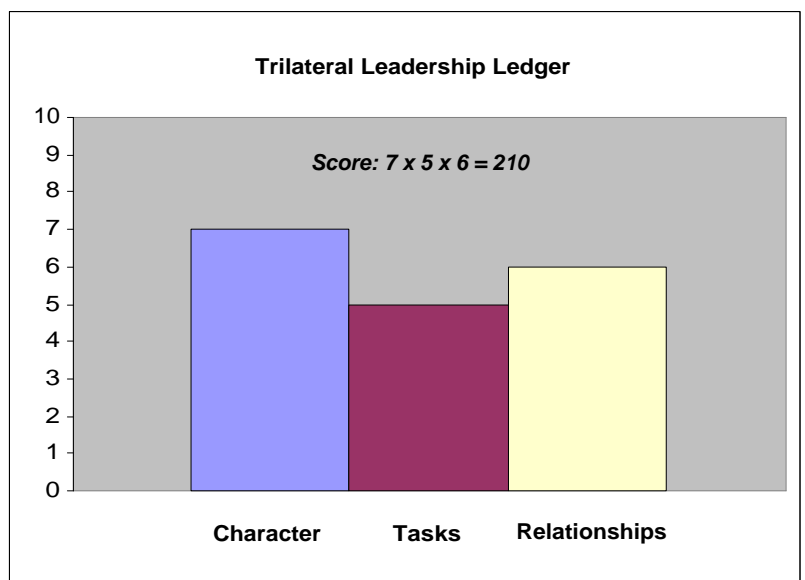
This represents people like those executives at Enron and Price Waterhouse who crashed and burned and took many of those they led with them.

Many would-be leaders have zero overall influence because they are zeroed out in one of the categories (right).



This third person (right) has worked hard to grow personally in all 3 areas. They have become an excellent leader, achieving much and making a great difference – in the home, in the workplace, at church, in their community. Their influence brings about positive change everywhere.

You can see here that there is an exponential effect and return on effort, when scores improve. This compound effect is the result of the influence this good leader has on others, which results in a synergistic effect – “together everyone achieves more”.



The Three Categories in Detail

Now let's look beneath the surface at:

Character (Being); this includes these attributes:

1. strong sense of purpose/vision (we know 'why' and 'what')
2. integrity (wholeness of person including honesty and all the other 9 attributes)
3. courage
4. proper core values (based on absolute truths)
5. faith and hope
6. humility
7. love for and patience with others
8. discipline
9. peace
10. self-mastery

Tasks (Achieving); this includes these attributes:

1. clear mission (we know 'how')
2. plans & goals
3. accepts responsibility
4. strong work ethic
5. available
6. willing to invest time and talent
7. committed to excellence
8. perseveres
9. pro-active
10. teachable

Relationships (Serving); this includes these attributes:

1. putting others first (we know 'who')
2. caring for and about people
3. accepting people
4. approving of people
5. appreciating people
6. valuing people (seeing the good in them)
7. encouraging people (to step out and be all they can be)
8. seeking win-win arrangements
9. living the 'golden rule' ("do unto others...")
10. discipleship buddy (has one, and is one)

Self-Assessment – Yours

First a warning: people tend to over-rate themselves. Often the gap between self-realization and reality is enormous. Our inability (or unwillingness) to see our blind-spots is a severely limiting factor. We tend to look at our strengths while seeing everyone else's weaknesses. Reversing this tendency is a foundational requirement of leadership growth.

Honest self-evaluation using this tool allows us to home in on areas that need specific attention, identify major areas for improvement and call attention to existing strengths, which we can further strengthen.

Give yourself ONE point for each attribute above that you honestly and confidently can say you have 100%. Doing this properly is a test of Character! Now add up your scores and do the math.

Next ask your spouse and several close Buddies to score you (and tell them not to be kind – that won't help you!)

Your Growth Plan

Now for action! You need to map your journey towards crowning achievement – deliberately and purposefully.

Let's say you score 5 for Character, 4 for Tasks and 4 for Relationships (that's pretty good!)
 $5 \times 4 \times 4 = 80$; so your total effectiveness score is 80.

Look at each of the 3 categories above and pick one from each that you did not score and that you feel by developing you will improve your score and your effectiveness.

Now develop a plan to help you grow, and aim to master the 3 attributes by the end of 2008; it will take time! You will need to buy and read "*Launching a Leadership Revolution*" to develop and carry out a good plan.

At the end of the year, if you have been successful, you will score $6 \times 5 \times 5 = 150$. By mastering one attribute in each category, you've almost doubled your effectiveness score. Imagine how that will play out in every aspect of your life and business!

Once you master and score a new attribute, pick another. Work on no more than 3 at any one time, be patient and persevere.

If you have a coach, ask for their help, and to hold you accountable for this personal growth.

Conclusion

"Do what you love in the service of others, who love what you do"

This book and the Ledger tool have given me a new perspective on this motto, by which I have been living for several years.

"Do" represents the Tasks that are to be done, what is to be achieved (and how).

"what you love" reminds us that the more we can operate from our passions and use our gifts, the more effective our service will be, and the more we will achieve. This Character element is foundational to everything else.

"in the service of others" fits the category of Relationships; this is what it's all about: what we do and achieve must be mostly for the benefit of others.

"who love what you do" defines the desired end result. Whatever we achieve with and for others based on good Character through excellent Relationships will be effective and celebrated: a true win-win.