

Instrument of a Leader

A man who was a leader in many circles – from politics to civil rights, education and philanthropy – held a defining belief about a foundational characteristic of a good leader. John W. Gardner, the architect of the Great Society programs as Lyndon Johnson's Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, observed:

If I had to name a single all-purpose instrument of leadership, it would be communication.

He was right. If you cannot communicate, you will not lead others effectively. Author and speaker John C. Maxwell identifies three standards to live by as you communicate to your people:

- **Be Consistent.** Nothing frustrates team members more than leaders who can't make up their minds.
- **Be Clear.** Your team cannot execute if they don't know what you want. Don't try to dazzle anyone with your intelligence; impress them with your simple straightforwardness.
- **Be Courteous.** Everyone deserves to be shown respect, no matter what their position or what kind of history you might have with them. If you are courteous to your people, you set a tone for the entire organization.

Following these three principles will pay good dividends for you, your associates and the residents we serve in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home.

--Beecher Hunter