

# Keep Mistakes in Perspective

We all make mistakes, agreed? That's because we are human beings, and we are not perfect, although we should strive to be.

What should we do when we make mistakes? How can we learn from them?

These are questions addressed by John C. Maxwell, author and recognized expert on leadership development.

"To leave the road of continual failure, a person must first utter the three most difficult words to say: *I was wrong*," Maxwell wrote in his book *The Maxwell Daily Reader*.

Admitting  
wrong  
is an act  
of the strong

A person must open his or her eyes to admit the mistakes and accept complete responsibility for the wrong actions and attitudes.

"Every failure you experience is a fork in the road," Maxwell said. "It's an opportunity to take the right action, learn from your mistakes and begin again."

Leadership expert Peter Drucker said: "The better a man is, the more mistakes he will make, for the more new things he will try. I would never promote to a top-level job a man who was not making mistakes ... otherwise, he is sure to be mediocre."

To help himself keep mistakes in perspective, Maxwell created this acronym:

- M.** Messages that give us feedback about life.
- I.** Interruptions that should cause us to reflect and think.
- S.** Signposts that direct us to the right path.
- T.** Tests that push us toward greater maturity.
- A.** Awakenings that keep us in the game mentally.
- K.** Keys that we can use to unlock the next door of opportunity.
- E.** Explorations that let us journey where we've never been before.
- S.** Statements about our developments and progress.

I like Maxwell's thought process about this tendency to err – common to all mankind – and how to benefit from wrong actions or judgment.

*Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy (Proverbs 28:13 ESV).*

– Beecher Hunter