

The Instrument of Leadership

John W. Gardner, an American author and Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare under President Lyndon Johnson, observed: "If I had to name a single all-purpose instrument of leadership, it would be communication."

John C. Maxwell, author and internationally recognized expert on leadership development, agrees. "Perhaps you are familiar with my books on leadership," he said, "then you know that I believe everything rises and falls on leadership. What I haven't mentioned before is that leadership rises and falls on communication."

If you lead your team, Maxwell added, give yourself these standards to live by as you communicate to your people:

1. **Be consistent.** Nothing frustrates team members more than leaders who can't make up their minds.
2. **Be clear.** Your team cannot execute if the members don't know what you want. Don't try to dazzle anyone with your intelligence; impress people with your straightforwardness.
3. **Be courteous.** Everyone deserves to be shown respect, no matter what the position or what kind of history you might have with him or her. By being courteous to your people, you set the tone for the entire organization.

"Never forget that because you are the leader, your communication sets the tone for the interaction among your people," Maxwell stressed. "Teams always reflect their leaders. And never forget that good communication is never one way. It should not be top-down or dictatorial. The best leaders listen, invite and then encourage participation."



Gardner's and Maxwell's messages resonate throughout Life Care and Century Park. Good leaders are good communicators.

The tongue of the wise commends knowledge (Proverbs 15:2 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter