



How to Grow as a Leader When You're at the Top!

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WHO PUSHES YOU WHEN YOU'RE AT THE TOP?

One of the most common questions I hear from executives and high-level leaders is: "How do I grow when I'm at the top, and there is no one overseeing my work to push me even further?" It's a great question, and one I definitely relate to.

At 27, I was an executive with a team of 200 people under my leadership. At the time, I remember thinking, now what? How do I keep pushing myself when there's no one to answer to? There was nobody to provide me with direction—no annual performance reviews to help me determine where I needed to improve. I felt stuck and alone!

The truth is if you are a high-level leader or an executive, you are likely hungry, ambitious, and thrive off growth. After all, that's probably how you got to where you are today. But getting feedback and consistently getting to the next level as a leader can be challenging and lonely the closer you get to the top. You either constantly hear, "You're great and the best boss ever," or people are too intimidated to give you feedback and tell you when they need more from you. I soon realized that if I were going to continuously excel professionally, as a leader, I had to get creative and foster my own opportunities for growth.

Here are three strategies you can implement today to ensure you don't get complacent and stagnant as a professional and high-level leader:



1. Although it's a scary thought, **anonymous assessments from your team** is the most effective tool when seeking constructive feedback on your leadership abilities. The anonymity of the survey lends your team space to provide true and honest feedback, which you may not have otherwise heard, without fear of criticism or retribution. Their feedback could be a blow to your ego and make your tummy cringe, but the only way to truly grow is to understand how others perceive you. Remember, most people have inaccurate assessments of themselves. Because of our natural, human tendency to focus primarily on our insecurities and weaknesses, self-assessments are rarely in sync with how others view us. These honest assessments from your team will indeed cause you to confront, reflect, and reassess how you're showing up.

2. Author and motivational speaker, Jim Rohn, says, "You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with." But if you're the smartest person in the room, where do you go from there? Having a **personal Board of Directors that holds you accountable** and serves your growth and development is key to pushing you forward and keeping you fresh—both in business and personal environments. Here are five types of people you should try to find to fill your personal board: The Cheerleader – They always have your back and uplift you. The Mentor – They educate and teach you new skills and ideas. The Constructive Trustee – They put you in check and tell you the truth whether you like it or not. However, they are also kind and don't tear you down in the process. The Connector – They connect you with the right people to help leverage your success. The Advocate – They talk you up to others and help you get your foot in the door whether it's as a speaker, a promotion at work, or assisting in client acquisition.

3. Lastly, **get yourself a coach!** The truth is we all have blind spots in our self-assessments, and we can't know what we don't know! Getting a coach is similar to an athlete who hires a personal trainer to expand their dominance of the sport. Our top clients are executives who want an extra push in their lives and need to seek motivation outside their workplace to get it. It's not embarrassing or looked down upon. In fact, hiring the right coach is a sign of professionalism as it demonstrates your dedication to professional and personal growth. It gives you a competitive edge and exposes you to new ideas and thoughts. Whether it's in leadership, business development, or a general focus on growth, a coach is your accountability partner who isn't afraid to tell you when you're wrong, steering off course, or need a complete mindset shift.



The best thing we can do as next-level leaders is to find the right ways to invite constructive feedback and advice into our circle. Honest, authentic feedback is the most important kind, and only exists when you as the leader put the proper action steps in place to make it happen. If you're seeking growth and don't know if you're a good leader or executive, implement anonymous surveys, build your personal board of directors, and hire a coach! You'll be thankful you did!

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