

Cross-Cultural Perspectives from the General Director



Seven Landmarks to Fuller Potential—Part One

Effectiveness comes through reaching your full potential. This is two-fold: your personal development and that of those under your leadership influence. Sounds easy, but how do you arrive at this destination of full potential? I have seven landmarks for the journey (not in the order of importance). I trust these will be a blessing to you, and you'll find points that can be shared with others.

1. **Stewardship:** We are personally responsible for our own stewardship. Ask, "Where and how should I invest my time, talents, and treasure?" Have you ever noticed how quickly others can identify someone that works? They tend to pile work on workers, and give little thought to the person's priorities, strengths, or time schedule. We have to be the ones to guard our giftedness. Invest well to bring forth the greatest dividends. Not all investments yield the same profits. We want to yield one hundred fold (Matthew 13:3-9).

Robert Slocum in *Ordinary Christians in a High-Tech World* says, "Even if the future is in God's hands, I have in my own hands the stewardship responsibility for developing my own talents, aptitudes, and abilities."

2. **Specialize:** Someone has said that if you do a little of everything, you will end up doing a whole lot of nothing. Life has many general practitioners, but few specialists. Being a specialist is the order of the day. Find something that fits both your gifts and a need in the organization, and give yourself to it. Become a professional. Look for things that you can do that no one else is doing (or can do). Not only will you gain a reputation, you will make an impact, and establish your ministry.

Paul said, "Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14, *NIV*).

Max DePree in his book, *Leadership is an Art* explains the concept of roving leadership. "Roving leaders have the special gifts, or the special strengths, or the special temperament to lead in these special situations."

He claims that in many organizations there are two kinds of leaders—both hierarchical leaders and roving leaders. Max gives an illustration of roving leadership. In the church service on Sunday morning, a man slumps over apparently having a serious health problem. What did the leader, the senior pastor do in this situation? Nothing. But in a few seconds a nurse was at the

man's side. She quickly attended to the man. Who was the roving leader in this situation? The nurse. "Roving leaders are those indispensable people in our lives who are there when we need them."

3. **Significance:** Get involved in something that makes a difference in eternity. What are you doing that will outlast you? Have a vision of what the Lord would have you to do. Life is too short just to aim for success. Shoot for significance, make an impact, and leave behind a legacy.

George Bernard Shaw said, "Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I've got ahold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations." Lord willing, I'll be back next month with the remaining points. Until then, make your landmarks to fuller potential. God deserves our best as we work for His kingdom, around the globe.