



Podcast Transcript

Podcasts in the learning to lead from the ground up series are provided by Sapphire Training and Consulting, LLC – dedicated to helping organizations mine the leaders of tomorrow from the followers of today. Information on this strategy is available at www.following2leading.com.

This topic *is* titled The Leadership Pyramid

The leadership pyramid is a philosophy that evolved from research and observation of successful leaders who have worked their way from the rank and file of front line employees. During their journeys, these visionaries will have consciously or subconsciously traversed all levels of the Pyramid. At the pinnacle, they will guide successful organizations and inspire new generations of leaders.

The pyramid itself is composed of 5 levels beginning with Following and Managing, then Transitioning to Leading and Vision. The art of following is the foundation of the Leadership Pyramid. You must be an effective follower if you aspire to ascend the pyramid and move into more demanding roles.

Good followers in an organization will be selected to become managers. Managing requires an understanding of the core job function of those whom you manage and building credibility with those employees. At this level of the Pyramid, you learn tactical skills and refine your own technical competence.

But, your skills as a manager can only take you so far. To become a leader, you must identify your management style and define the leadership style that ultimately fits you best. Your transition will be a time of discovery as you observe the styles around you and choose what aspects work for you and what traits to leave behind.

With your leadership style defined, you can begin leading the charge into the future. But, this level of the Pyramid is not without its challenges. You must refine your skills and inspire people to follow you. Exercising a degree of humility and remembering your roots in the foundation of the Pyramid will go far in building the confidence others have in you.

Ultimately, you will reach the pinnacle of your career as a visionary in your field. Sharing your vision to innovate is critical to your success as a true leader. Life at the top is the culmination of your experiences throughout the Pyramid, and all five levels play a vital role in your great achievements.

Not everyone will begin their ascent of the Pyramid at the same level. Your place in your career lifecycle will determine the level that best fits your circumstances. Even if you do not start at the base, you will benefit from reflecting on your experience in the context of the lower levels. The time spent at each level will vary by individual, but getting to the summit of the Pyramid is not about competition. It is



about competence. Your success in an organization depends not upon how you get to the top, but the impression you make on others during the journey. People respect leaders that are competent in their field, understand the jobs of those who follow them, and can still be humble in the light of their accomplishments.

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