**Preparing for a Leadership Role: Top Resources**

Preparing for a leadership role is a huge responsibility. Many of the leadership lessons I learned came from consuming content from inspiring leaders who prepared me for new challenges ahead. Here are some of the top resources that have helped me to develop better leadership skills.

## ****Preparing for a Leadership Role: Fall to your highest level of preparation****

Stepping into my role as the VP of Sales at CCB Technology, I knew I was taking on a role that exceeded my ability. I’ve heard it said that “you fall to your highest level of preparation” and so I began absorbing as much advice as I could. My goal wasn’t (and still isn’t) to just be known as an excellent leader. I want to be someone worthy of having followers.\*

\*Clarification: when I say *followers* I’m not talking about social media influencer type followers. I’m talking about people that look to me as a leader. And not primarily because of a title that changed – but because of influence.

Over a nine-month span, I read/listened to 13 books, tuned into 100s of hours of podcasts and had several face-to-face discussions regarding leadership and how to not mess it up. Quickly I learned that no one has it all figured out, but I also learned that these resources were going to be invaluable for me.

### **But the most impactful/valuable/lifesaving resources wasn’t a book or a podcast. It was having a mentor. My advice is: get one. If you have questions about mentorship, we’ve got a podcast that will help. Episode 72 –** [Mentorship](https://podcast.impactofleadership.com/podcast/mentorship-jon-nelson/) **with Jon Nelson.**

### **Here are a few books and podcasts that I’ve found particularly helpful in my first year as an executive.**

#### 1. [The Craig Grochel Leadership Podcast](https://www.craiggroeschel.com/leadershippodcast)

#### Listen while you’re on a run or walk in the morning. And make sure you send yourself an email with notes because you’ll love this content. Craig brings practical application for parenting, running a business, serving at a non-profit and being a healthy human. This is one of my favorites.

#### 2. [Entreleadership](https://www.entreleadership.com/), book and podcast

This has been the knowledge base I’ve referred the most to people this year. To me, the Entreleadership podcast is one of the most content-rich I’ve found. It’s an interview style format focusing exclusively on excellence in leadership. Their tagline is “of leaders, by leaders and for leaders”. The book was written by Dave Ramsey and is what the podcast was born out of. Definitely worth the time of any entrepreneur, executive or someone aspiring to be. It’s a holistic approach to leading people with stories of how Dave failed & stumbled forward to land where he is today.

#### 3. [Never Split Difference-Negotiating as if Your Life Depended on It](https://www.amazon.com/Never-Split-Difference-Negotiating-Depended-ebook/dp/B014DUR7L2), book

No matter how well you prepare, there will inevitably be surprises in life. This seems especially true when goals are big, and the stakes are high. In his book, Chris Voss, former FBI hostage negotiator and founder of Black Swan Group, outlines negotiation tactics that he used during his 24-year tenure with the FBI as a hostage negotiator. Yes – part of being a leader is negotiating.

We had a member of Chris Voss’ team, Derek Gaunt, on our podcast and bought him back for a more indepth webinar. Podcast episode #28 – Leading Like a Hostage Negotiator. Webinar Understanding Tactical Empathy.

#### 3. [Building a Storybrand](https://buildingastorybrand.com/), book and podcast (podcast is now called Business Made Simple)

Star Wars, Tommy Boy and just about any other movie follow the same line of storytelling – and we love it! Donald Miller works through the ‘Storybrand framework’ in his book and teaches us how to tell a story that will keep people listening. Humor, practical application and genuine approachability come across in both the book and the podcast.

My favorite line from Don is, **“**If you confuse, you’ll lose. Noise is the enemy and creating a clear message is the best way to grow your business**.”** This is how he starts every podcast and the theme is continued throughout each episode. A major takeaway I’ve gotten from Storybrand is, “The key is to be seen, heard and understood”.

Self-reflection and some social experimenting revealed that most people didn’t understand what CCB did after talking with me. The uncomfortable next question was, “Does that mean my team isn’t communicating clearly either?” \*gulp\*

#### 5. [The Ideal Team Player](https://www.tablegroup.com/books/ideal-team-player), book

Business books can be painstakingly boring. This book isn’t. Patrick Lencioni lays out a fable of a family business going through a transition of leadership. It’s written in a way that helps the reader learn along with the characters instead of being in a lecture hall with a professor. (Spoiler alert!!) Here are the ingredients for an ideal team player: Humble, Hungry, Smart. Don’t worry, I knew the punchline before I got the book as well and it made reading the book even better.

How do these work together? All in equal portions? What questions should be asked to know if someone’s an ideal team player? Wait…am I an ideal team player? \*eyes shifting around the room, palms sweating a little\*

### **Change can be crazy hard**

Most of us will need a ton of help in preparing for a leadership role if we’re going to be successful. Somethings I’ve learned are I MUST surround myself with people that complement my weaknesses. I HAVE to ask colleagues ‘how am I doing?’ and then listen to uncomfortably honest responses. I HAD BETTER learn from others who are further ahead than I am. If I don’t…it’s a matter of time before pride will creep in and I’ll be off course. So the leader goes, so the team, organization, family goes.

True story: I recently went to a friend and asked for feedback about starting a podcast, the response was priceless. “Having a podcast is this generation’s lower-back tattoo.” After wiping the tears from my eyes because of laughter I read more of the email and realized I now have to go through with it. (Then I moved the email to my ‘Bad Day’ folder for future use.)

### **Leadership Resources & Community**

We were created for community and leadership can be isolating. As you step into a new role or undertake a new assignment, know this—you’re not alone. Impact of Leadership exists to equip, connect, and grow you. And have fun along the way.

Become a member of the IOL Community today! [Our Promises](https://impactofleadership.com/promise)

Connect with me on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/stevelscherer/) and check out IOL on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqhqwYDq79KQBOgyGko6bTg) & [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/impact-of-leadership/about/?viewAsMember=true)

Listen to episode #84 with Sarah Sloyan talking about her unlikely career path <https://bit.ly/3nmW4M0>

The last thing I’ve got for you is something I was told and find encouragement in.
**“No one becomes a great leader overnight. Be patient with yourself and take the next step in the right direction.”**