

# PERSONAL LEADERSHIP

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## 31: Who's Driving?

### Episode Notes

Thank you for joining *Take Your Lead Podcast!*

Who's in the driving seat? This is a question that you ought to ask yourself.

Who actually has the steering wheel of your life?

Often times we find ourselves in different seasons of our lives, having different drivers leading us to different destinations.

Growing up you don't have a choice as to who's driving, but the older you get, you can be more intentional as to who is in the driving seat.

This helps to ensure that you're in the right car, not only the right car but also the right driver.

If you're ensured that you're in the right vehicle, with the right driver, chances of you getting to the destination that you need to get to, are higher.

Welcome to Take Your Lead Podcast, a podcast for a community of leaders who are intentional and purposeful about their growth.

We're excited to release our 31st podcast episode, it's really been an amazing journey, and we keep growing as best as we can, bringing you quality content that will help you Take Your Lead.

In this episode Mzwandile Magagula will be sharing on the topic of influence, who is driving?

When you are younger, your influencers are by default, but as you grow, they are by design, you choose who influences you.



“Leadership is influence, nothing less, nothing more.”

~John C. Maxwell

Influence is the capacity to have an effect on the character, development or behaviour of someone or something, or the effect itself.

Often times you find yourself in a confined environment where influence is controlled and if you're not intentional about containing that atmosphere, you might find yourself getting out of that confinement and opening uncertain doors for external influence.

For example, when driving out on a cold day in cold weather, there are a lot of things you can do to control the climate personally, one of the things you do is dress up warmer, and drink warmer beverages, that's in your control.

However, the minute you walk out, you start experiencing the different atmosphere.

Get into your car, you're able to turn on the air conditioner and switch the temperature however you want to experience it in the car, and you're able to preserve that.

The moment you walk out of the car, you are then exposed, this is where influence comes in, where you need to be very intentional about how the people around you affect your character, your development and your behaviour.

The dictionary also speaks of social influence as comprising the ways in which individuals change their behaviour to meet the demands of a social environment.

This is key because often times, we find ourselves in environments that exert pressure on us to conform and this is seen through socialisation, peer pressure, persuasion, sales, marketing and through social media.

It's extremely important for you as a leader to guard your influence, ask yourself who's in the driving seat?

Is it your emotions that are actually influencing you in this season of your life?



Is it the experience of feeling like you're being left out, everyone is succeeding and doing and living glamorous lives and here you are stuck?

Is it someone you saw or someone you aspire to be?

Think back to when you were growing up, to someone that was the greatest influence in your life.

Ask yourself how did they have the greatest influence in your life?

What did they do that caused them to influence you in that manner?

Fast forward to where you are and ask yourself who currently has the greatest influence in your life?

This is very important because it helps you to shift and be more aware by taking inventory, so that you're more aware of the negative from the positive ones.

If you're still in school, ask yourself who's influencing you at school, if it's at church, who is the spiritual authority?

It might be the people you serve wither you do life with.

If it's in your career are your finances, qualifications, what exactly is influencing you?

This is important because as leaders you can't leave it to fate.

Who influences how you process your emotions and decisions? Is it from selfish motives or from positive motives?

Is it self-seeking or is it empowering?

Are you being influenced by your securities or your insecurities, because if you're being influenced by your security, there's a danger zone.

A danger zone is a place where you operate and you find yourself out of character and there are a few symptoms that are a red flag when you begin to operate in security as a leader because of the influences that you're having in that season of your life.

If you're operating in insecurity, you cannot lead because you lead from a place of need, you get too needy, and when you are too needy, you don't provide security for those you lead.



You want to control everything, you want to take from the people that you lead more than you give to them.

Insecure people are in a quest for validation and affirmation instead of giving validation and affirmation to their followers or the people that they lead, they often need to receive it from them.

If you're insecure, you limit, you deal with limitations, you don't give the people you lead or serve your best, you can't genuinely celebrate the victories won by others because you're being influenced by insecurity, because you're jealous of the people that you lead.

You end up limiting the people that you lead, you end up becoming a lid to them growing and becoming better.

### ***Let's look at positive influence:***

Who are the people that you influence as a leader?

Everyone has some amount of influence, some might think that they don't have because they don't have a certain amount of following, they don't have a lot of people that they speak to, however, sociologists tell us the most introverted of people will influence ten thousand people in an average lifetime.

As you consider your influence on others, list three individuals that you feel you have some sort of influence.

Try to select people from your various facets of life, people from family, work, friends, church, community.

After you've written down the name of the people that you influence, next to their names, begin to jot down the primary reason you believe you have influence in their life.

As you curate this list, it will help you to become more intentional about the influence that you have in people.

Leaders when it comes to influence, are always the first on the scene, based on how trained and how aware they are of their influence, you're the bucket either of water or a bucket of fuel.



If there's a big fire, the leader is first responder, based on how they've leveraged and worked on their influence, they'll either be able to pour the water and quench the fire or alternatively, pour the fuel and make the fire bigger.

Your influence is similar to that, you can either help people, you help them manage what they're going through, alternatively, you can cause certain things to be exaggerated and unnecessary.

If you put effort into developing yourself as a leader, you have the potential to influence more people and to do so in more significant ways.

“There have been meetings of only a moment which have left impressions for eternity, no one of us can understand that mysterious thing we call influence.”

~JR Miller

That's why you can meet someone coincidentally only to find that that's actually a meeting that will influence and change the trajectory of your life.

As a leader, as you begin to work with the influence that you have, you need to be cognizant of the fact that you're becoming the picture of leadership that is in front of you.

This now moves you to the space of after having identified the people that influence you, the people in whose car you're in the driving seat, you need to now move to your driving seat.

Who are the people who are influencing you, whose picture that you have in front of you because you are actually becoming that picture.

What are your silent, subtle influences?

Often times they're not loud, often times they're not in your face, often times it's certain relationships that you invest a lot of time in, certain people you talk a lot with, certain people you do life with and they are influencing you.

It's extremely important as a leader to choose the circle of influence wisely.

***Three thoughts how to choose your influence wisely:***



1. As you begin to build an inner circle of influence, ensure that the people that you have, firstly in your inner circle, are people who are aligned around your mission, your vision and the values that you uphold in your life.

Do they possess an ample character and competence, because often times, character is very key but we also need competence as well.

Are they competent in what they're doing and in the influence that they're leading me into.

Also look for personal chemistry, that makes influence flow easier.

2. Ask yourself are the people who are influencing you, how are they influencing you?

Are they people who are managing possibly the same leadership and life issues as you are? People who have been where you are at, where you want to go.

This helps you to ensure that you're being influenced correctly.

3. You need friends who accept you for the person that you are, who will not only accept you for the position or the title that you hold, but for the person and the character and the calibre of person that you are.

We need to be well aware of who is in the driving seat.

### **Application:**

Write down your influence list, write down the people who have added value to your life, not only people who have added value but also people who are currently adding value to your life in this season that you're in.

This is key because as leaders, you don't have to be in a high profile occupation to be a person of influence.

If your life in any way connects with other people, you are an influencer, everything you do at home, at church, in your job, has an impact on the lives of other people, so ensure that you are well aware of who is in the driving seat.



If you are the one who is in the driving seat, ensure that you're aware where you are leading the people to, you know the destination and you're acquainted with it and you have the licence to take them there.

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