

Influence
MAGAZINE

MAKE IT COUNT

An eight-week study
for leadership teams



**CAN-DO LEADERSHIP:
EIGHT QUALITIES OF LEADERS
WHO MAKE IT HAPPEN**

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DISCUSSION GUIDE

Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Positivity: I Choose an Optimistic Outlook

Assess: In which circumstances is it hardest for you to remain optimistic?

Insights and Ideas

In their book, *Spiritual Leadership*, Richard and Henry Blackaby observe the importance of leaders maintaining a positive and optimistic outlook. They use George Marshall as an example, writing: “When George Marshall became the U.S. Secretary of State, he was informed that spirits were low in the State Department. Marshall advised his staff, ‘Gentlemen, enlisted men may be entitled to morale problems, but officers are not... I expect all officers in this department to take care of their own morale. No one is taking care of my morale.’ If leaders cannot manage their own attitudes, they cannot be entrusted with the morale of others. When leaders believe anything is possible, their followers will come to believe that too.”

If you don’t believe it can happen, nobody you lead will believe it either. Can-do leaders understand that both positivity and negativity are contagious. They not only shape our outlook, but they spread to the people we serve, the teams we build, and the organizations we lead.

The apostle Paul understood the importance of an optimistic outlook. In his letter to the Philippians, he offers three insights to cultivate an optimistic attitude:

1. *Pray regularly.* In Philippians 4:6, Paul said, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Leadership is intense and stressful. Paul’s antidote was to pray regularly, handing over any concerns to the Lord. As your anxiety falls away through prayer, Paul said, “the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (verse 7). Your attitude and outlook will certainly become more positive, too.

2. *Live thankfully.* Paul also said to pray “with thanksgiving” (verse 6). What would happen if you ended every day by writing down two things from that day for which you were thankful? How might this change your perspective on the day (especially when you’ve experienced a bad day)? Over time, you would develop a habit of gratitude, learning to see the best in every situation.

3. *Think positively.* Paul described the kind of attitude we should have when he said, “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things” (Philippians 4:8). What we think requires a choice on our part. You will never feel your way into positive thinking; you have to make a deliberate decision.

Reflect and Discuss

1. Which of Paul’s three insights is your biggest challenge? Why?
2. What does it look like to deliberately think positively when everything about your situation says to do otherwise?
3. How often do you express gratitude to God and to others? What does this say about your outlook on life, leadership and ministry?

Apply

To become a healthier and more optimistic can-do leader, start a gratitude journal for the next 30 days. Each day, jot down two things you were grateful for that day, and then take a moment to pray and express your gratitude to the Lord

Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Positivity: I Choose an Optimistic Outlook

Assess: In which circumstances is it hardest for you to remain optimistic?

How to cultivate an optimistic attitude:

1. *Pray* _____.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Philippians 4:6).

“The peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).

2. *Live* _____.

“... with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Philippians 4:6).

3. *Think* _____.

“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things” (Philippians 4:8).

Apply

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Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen**Initiative: I Don't Wait for Someone to Ask**

Team Review: What impact has your gratitude journal had on your attitude?

Assess: How likely are you to take initiative to do something without waiting for someone to ask?

Insights and Ideas

Can-do leaders are not bystanders. They don't wait for someone to tell them what to do; they take initiative. In fact, initiative is one of the best ways to spot an emerging leader. Proverbs 10:4 warns us, "Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth." Those who take initiative are far from lazy. Instead, they choose diligence in all they do.

Initiative even has ramifications for our spiritual health. James said, "If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them" (James 4:17). Knowing what's good is not enough; we must take initiative to act on what we know.

Can-do leaders recognize the difference initiative makes in their day-to-day leadership. When we lack initiative, it diminishes our performance and team dynamics in at least three areas:

1. *Volunteering.* The best team members notice needs and willingly volunteer without waiting for someone to ask. In other words, their initiative doesn't end with their job description. If another member of the team needs assistance, they willingly offer to help. If somebody asks, "Whose job is it to ...," their first response isn't, "Not me." Can-do leaders *can*, and therefore often *do*.

2. *Learning.* Leaders with initiative figure things out. Their posture isn't, "I don't know how to do this; therefore, I'll just wait for somebody else to figure it out." Instead, can-do leaders look for ways to improve, grow and implement best practices. Leaders who don't take initiative to act usually don't take initiative to learn and grow.

3. *Execution.* Can-do leaders don't procrastinate. Instead, they proactively plan, act and over-deliver. They put feet to their goals, responsibilities and objectives. One reason can-do leaders go further than other leaders is because they don't just talk about good ideas; they actually make those ideas happen. As Thomas Edison once said, "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

If you have a team member who doesn't take initiative, you'll face two constant frustrations: building fires and missing opportunities. In other words, you'll continually have to spark a fire underneath that team member who lacks self-motivation, or you'll miss important opportunities because the team member was too slow to act. Initiative makes the difference, personally and organizationally.

Reflect and Discuss

1. How have you seen initiative in volunteering, learning and execution make a difference on your team?
2. How have you found yourself "building fires" or "missing opportunities" because team members didn't take initiative?
3. What are some practical things you can do to increase initiative, personally and organizationally?

Apply

Do an assessment of your own initiative. Ask three people who work with you to rate you on a scale from 1 to 10 in the area of initiative, and then to offer you one way you can improve your initiative quotient.

Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Initiative: I Don't Wait for Someone to Ask

Assess: How likely are you to take initiative to do something without waiting for someone to ask?

“Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth” (Proverbs 10:4).

“If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them” (James 4:17).

A lack of initiative diminishes:

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2. _____.

Leaders who don't take initiative to act usually don't take initiative to learn and grow.

3. _____.

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Apply

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Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Responsibility: I Own It

Team Review: What is one way you discovered that you could improve your initiative?

Assess: Which responsibilities are you most willing to own, and which ones are you most tempted to ignore?

Insights and Ideas

When you rent a car, you do nothing to take care of that car. You don't check the oil, put air in the tires, or give any attention to maintenance issues. In fact, speed bumps don't exist when you rent a car. But when you *own* a car, you have a vested interest in its performance and reliability; therefore, you take care of it.

Unfortunately, we often take a renter's mentality when it comes to our work and other areas of life. Usually, the ramifications are minimal early on, but the compounding effect of a renter's attitude is lost momentum, decreased health and missed opportunity. It can even lead to job loss or other negative outcomes.

First Peter 4:10 says, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." While a steward is not an owner, the steward chooses to manage what the owner entrusts to him or her, *with the owner's interests in mind*. Renters may not know the owner, much less care about the owner. Can-do leaders own many responsibilities, but let's highlight four of them:

1. *Can-do leaders own expectations*. Whatever expectations come with their roles, can-do leaders own up to them, never making excuses for why they didn't do what they should have done.

2. *Can-do leaders own assignments*. When can-do leaders receive assignments to perform tasks outside their normal responsibilities, they don't complain about it; they own it and then deliver with excellence.

3. *Can-do leaders own growth*. Nobody can delegate personal growth to someone else. *You* have to grow *you*. You have to cooperate with the Holy Spirit's work inside you. And you have to be on the front lines of learning best practices to deliver the most effective ministry. Can-do leaders own their growth.

4. *Can-do leaders own the blame*. There will be times in leadership when the train will come off the tracks. Everything inside you will want to cast the blame on someone else. Don't do it. Own it. Others may have dropped the ball, but you'll never be able to coach them forward if you can't model ownership.

To own it, can-do leaders ask the right questions. Others may ask, "Why do we have to go through all this change?" But can-do leaders ask, "How can I adapt to the changing world?" While others want to know who dropped the ball, can-do leaders ask, "How can I contribute?" Others may ask, "Why won't my leader train me?" But can-do leaders ask, "How can I invest in my personal development?" Can-do leaders are owners.

Reflect and Discuss

1. Why are we so resistant to acting like owners?
2. Which of the four areas of ownership are we ignoring in our church or organization?
3. What else do can-do leaders own?

Apply

Which expectation, assignment, growth area or failure have you been refusing to own? What would it look like for you to own it today? Who needs to know you're going to own it? What will you do next?

Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Responsibility: I Own It

Assess: Which responsibilities are you most willing to own, and which ones are you most tempted to ignore?

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms” (1 Peter 4:10).

Four areas can-do leaders own:

1. *Can-do leaders own* _____.

Whatever expectations come with their roles, can-do leaders own up to them.

2. *Can-do leaders own* _____.

When can-do leaders receive assignments to perform tasks outside their normal responsibilities,

3. *Can-do leaders own* _____.

Nobody can delegate personal growth to someone else. You have to grow *you*.

4. *Can-do leaders own the* _____.

Others may have dropped the ball, but you’ll never be able to coach them forward if you can’t model ownership.

Apply

Which expectation, assignment, growth area or failure have you been refusing to own? What would it look like for you to own it today? Who needs to know you’re going to own it? What will you do next?

Study 4

Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Decisiveness: I Make Decisions Without Boggling Down My Leader

Team Review: What area of responsibility did you take greater ownership of last week?

Assess: What kinds of decisions do you have the most hesitancy in making?

Insights and Ideas

When leaders step into a role, they have to execute responsibilities without constantly bogging down their supervisor. Yes, there's an initial training period, and yes, a leader should work hard to serve the team by equipping them with the necessary resources to excel. But after that initial orientation period, the best team members learn how to make decisions without relying on their boss for constant direction.

Proverbs 2:6 says, "For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding." The same Holy Spirit living in your pastor, or your leader, lives inside you. He is able and ready to give you the wisdom you need to make the best decision in the moment. That does not mean you should never seek counsel or advice. Scripture is clear that there is wisdom among counselors. But if your supervisor has empowered you to make decisions, he or she expects you to do so without needing constant input.

When Moses delegated responsibility to leaders to oversee groups of 10, 50, 100, and 1,000, he simultaneously released the decision-making authority they would need to lead effectively. In Exodus 18:22–23, Jethro told Moses, "Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied."

Your leader is under a great deal of stress and needs you to help de-clutter his or her mind by making decisions when appropriate. So, how do you make decisions without bogging down your leader? Start with these eight questions to help you make a D.E.C.I.S.I.O.N.:

- ***DNA***. Does the decision authentically reflect our vision, values and DNA?
- ***Excellence***. How will we execute the decision to reflect our organization's commitment to excellence?
- ***Consequence***. What are the potential immediate and long-term outcomes of this decision?
- ***Impact***. How will the decision impact other staff, other ministries or our team's culture?
- ***Stewardship***. Does the decision reflect wise stewardship of our time, talent and financial resources?
- ***Investigation***. Have we adequately researched and tested the decision?
- ***Ownership***. Are you willing to own the decision, its execution and its consequences?
- ***Noble***. Is this a noble decision that reflects integrity and honors God?

Reflect and Discuss

1. On what kinds of decisions should you seek your leader's perspective?
2. What do you need in order to make more decisions without having to get your leader's input?
3. How do the eight decision-making questions help you?

Apply

Think of a decision you need to make that you are considering bringing to your leader. Before going to your leader, walk through the eight questions above, and see whether you can make the decision on your own.

Study
4

TEAM GUIDE

Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Decisiveness: I Make Decisions Without Boggling Down My Leader

Assess: What kinds of decisions do you have the most hesitancy in making?

“For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding” (Proverbs 2:6).

“Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied” (Exodus 18:22–23).

Eight questions to help you make a D.E.C.I.S.I.O.N.:

- **D** _____. Does the decision authentically reflect our vision, values and DNA?
- **E** _____. How will we execute the decision to reflect our organization’s commitment to excellence?
- **C** _____. What are the potential immediate and long-term outcomes of this decision?
- **I** _____. How will the decision impact other staff, other ministries or our team’s culture?
- **S** _____. Does the decision reflect wise stewardship of our time, talent and financial resources?
- **I** _____. Have we adequately researched and tested the decision?
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Apply

Think of a decision you need to make that you are considering bringing to your leader. Before going to your leader, walk through the eight questions above, and see whether you can make the decision on your own.

Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen**Solution-Minded: I Won't Quit Until I Find the Right Solution**

Team Review: How did the decision-making framework help you make a decision without bogging down your leader?

Assess: Can you share an example of a solution you came up with through a tremendous amount of tenacity?

Insights and Ideas

The leadership landscape always comes with problems. About the time you solve one problem, it seems like three more line up right behind it. The lowest-level leaders have the ability to spot a problem. In fact, nonleaders are quite capable of finding problems. It takes a can-do leader to do something about the problem.

Jethro was a solution-minded can-do leader. After watching Moses serve as judge for the people from morning till evening, Jethro pointed out the problem. He said to Moses, “What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?” (Exodus 18:14). If Jethro had ended the conversation there, he wouldn't have been much help. Again, anybody can point out a problem.

After Moses gave an excuse for not doing things differently, Jethro challenged his perspective with a fresh solution. “Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him” (Exodus 18:19). Then Jethro mapped out a plan for Moses to delegate authority to leaders who would oversee groups of 10, 50, 100, and 1,000. Yes, Jethro pointed out the problem, but he quickly offered a solution to resolve it. To become a solution-minded leader, embrace the following three R's:

1. **Resist.** Resist an inflexible attitude and the temptation to make excuses. Moses' initial response was to make an excuse: “The people come to me to seek God's will. Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God's decrees and instructions” (Exodus 18:15–16). Moses was so deep in his problem that he couldn't see any other way to lead.

2. **Research.** Aggressively search for creative answers *inside* and *outside* of your network of relationships and sources of knowledge. Solving new problems requires new ways of thinking, and new thinking requires new sources of knowledge.

3. **Refuse.** Refuse to take “no” for an answer. Keep searching, reading, studying, talking and researching until you find the best way to solve the problem. Don't quit in the middle. Everything feels like a failure in the middle, but persevere until you find a solution.

Reflect and Discuss

1. When was a time you became so immersed in a problem you couldn't see your way out? How did you finally find a solution?
2. With what problems do you struggle to maintain a flexible, solution-minded attitude? How do you push forward?
3. Who is your go-to person when you need to solve a problem? How could you broaden your “research pool” to help you embrace new thinking, and thus new solutions?

Apply

Think of a tough problem you are dealing with right now. Apply the three R's (resist, research, refuse) to the problem. What's the first step you need to take?

Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Solution-Minded: I Won't Quit Until I Find the Right Solution

Assess: Can you share an example of a solution you came up with through a tremendous amount of tenacity?

“What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?” (Exodus 18:14).

“Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people’s representative before God and bring their disputes to him” (Exodus 18:19).

The three R’s of a solution-minded leader:

1. _____.

“The people come to me to seek God’s will. Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God’s decrees and instructions” (Exodus 18:15–16).

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Aggressively search for creative answers *inside* and *outside* of your network of relationships and sources of knowledge.

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Apply

Think of a tough problem you are dealing with right now. Apply the three R’s (resist, research, refuse) to the problem. What’s the first step you need to take?

Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Mobilizer: I Don't Do Ministry Alone

Team Review: How did the three R's (resist, research, refuse) help you solve a tough problem?

Assess: Are you more inclined to do ministry alone or with a team? Why?

Insights and Ideas

The eight qualities in this series of lessons are characteristics of can-do *leaders*, not can-do *achievers*. What's the difference between a leader and an achiever? Achievers are *doers*, and leaders are *developers*. Achievers are limited by their own time, talent and expertise. Leaders are only limited by the time, talent and expertise of the team they develop around them. Achievers do ministry alone. Leaders do ministry with and through others. Achievers are focused on what *they* can do. Leaders are focused on activating and mobilizing the *can-do* in others.

Moses started out as a can-do achiever. He worked long hours (morning till night), listening to the concerns of the people, and providing judgment on their various disputes. But his father-in-law, Jethro, saw the lid in Moses' life. He told Moses, "What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone" (Exodus 18:17-18).

That conversation became the catalyst for change. Moses took Jethro's advice, recruited qualified leaders, and mobilized those leaders to help carry the load. Can-do leaders mobilize others for ministry in three ways:

1. *Mobilize with resources.* Every person on your team needs resources to carry out his or her responsibilities. Those resources might include tools, equipment, supplies ... anything necessary to do the work. According to Gallup, having the right equipment to do the job is one of the keys necessary to increase employee engagement.

2. *Mobilize with training.* Resources alone are not enough. A good mobilizer provides the training necessary to excel. Some training is transactional. It's the kind of training needed for doing specific tasks in a specific role. For example, greeters need to know how to greet, café workers need to know how to make coffee, and pilots need to know how to fly a plane. They need training to carry out the transactions their jobs require. But people also need a second type of training: transformational training. This is training in skills like leadership, teamwork and emotional intelligence. These skills are valuable in any type of role. Be sure to provide your team with both transactional and transformational training.

3. *Mobilize with authority.* Finally, every can-do leader must provide team members with decision-making authority. You don't need order-takers; you need people who can think, decide and act on their own. If they don't have the authority to make decisions, they'll never help you or the organization.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What kind of resources do you need to provide to the members of your team?
2. Do you primarily conduct transactional training or transformational training with your team? How can you intentionally provide both?
3. What decision-making authority do you need to release to your team?

Apply

Identify one thing you can do to provide the resources, training and authority your team needs. Then, mobilize your team to succeed with those keys.

Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Mobilizer: I Don't Do Ministry Alone

Assess: Are you more inclined to do ministry alone or with a team? Why?

“What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone” (Exodus 18:17–18).

How can-do leaders mobilize others for ministry:

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2. *Mobilize with* _____.

Some training is transactional. Some training is transformtional. Your team needs both.

3. *Mobilize with* _____.

You don't need order takers; you need people who can think, decide and act on their own.

Apply

Identity one thing you can do to provide the resources, training and authority your team needs. Then, mobilize your team to succeed with those keys.



Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Resilience: I Bounce Back After Every Setback

Team Review: What progress have you made in mobilizing your team for greater success?

Assess: How do you typically handle setbacks in leadership?

Insights and Ideas

Martin Luther, father of the Reformation, translated the New Testament into German while confined to the castle of Wartburg. Ludwig van Beethoven wrote his best masterpieces after going deaf. Thomas Edison rebuilt his invention factory after it burned to the ground. Edison was 66 years old when he made that bold decision.

Resilience marked each of these leaders. They learned to bounce back after every setback. Hardship is the curriculum in the school of leadership. It has the power to refine the very best leaders. Those who are shaped by it reveal the greatest can-do attitudes.

When the apostle Paul was in prison, he wrote a letter to the believers in Philippi and offered extraordinary perspective from a prison cell. He said, “I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14). Then he said, “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4). Finally, Paul said, “I can do all this through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13).

Paul endured every hardship imaginable — rejection, beatings, shipwreck, imprisonment, snakebite, and more. But Paul refused to let setbacks undermine his calling. He was resilient, never abandoning the task before him. He even told his young apprentice Timothy, “Fight the good fight of the faith” (1 Timothy 6:12).

Can-do leaders will face hardship, setbacks, pain and difficulties. There are times when leadership will feel like a crushing weight. So, how do you stay resilient? There are two keys that are critical in the journey:

1. *Inner resources.* You need inner resources to withstand the pressure. Those inner resources are things like prayer, God’s Word, gratitude and the welcomed work of the Holy Spirit. Paul said, “I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being” (Ephesians 3:16).

2. *Outer support.* No matter how good you are, you are not good enough to do ministry alone. You need family, friends, coaches, counselors and teammates with whom you can journey together. God designed us to need Him, but He also designed us to need one another.

If you’re going to win the long race of can-do leadership, you have to access both inner resources and outer support on a regular basis.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What are some of the hardest ministry battles you’ve faced, and how did you bounce back from them?
2. How have inner resources helped build your resiliency and fed your can-do spirit?
3. Who have been the greatest sources of outer support when facing tough times? How did these people help you hang on to a can-do spirit?

Apply

If you’re in a difficult season right now, set aside extra time to build your inner resources through prayer, worship, God’s Word and His Spirit. Then, schedule time with people who will encourage you. These are the resources God uses to build your resiliency.

Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Resilience: I Bounce Back After Every Setback

Assess: How do you typically handle setbacks in leadership?

“I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14).

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4).

“I can do all this through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13).

Two keys to resilience:

1. *Inner* _____.

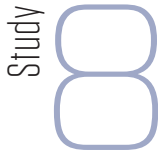
“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being” (Ephesians 3:16).

2. *Outer* _____.

No matter how good you are, you are not good enough to do ministry alone.

Apply

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Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Grit: I Don't Give Up Until the Job Is Done

Team Review: How has increasing your inner resources and outer support helped you become more resilient?

Assess: How would you define grit?

Insights and Ideas

Thomas Edison once said, “Many of life’s failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.” Can-do leaders possess the grit necessary to keep going. While resilience helps you bounce back, grit helps you thrust forward, no matter how high the mountain stands before you.

Angela Lee Duckworth, an author and professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, has extensively researched the subject of grit. She observed, “Grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future, day in day out, not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years, and working really hard to make that future a reality. Grit is living life like it’s a marathon, not a sprint.”

Not only does grit have benefits in the moment, but there is a long-term blessing that comes with grit, too. James 1:12 says, “Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.”

So, what does it take to increase your grit? Start with these three keys:

1. *Inspiring purpose.* If you don’t believe in what you’re doing, you’ll quit the minute you lose interest. Grit requires a purpose that is clear, convincing and compelling. It has to be something worth giving your time, talent and resources to; otherwise, you’ll throw in the towel when the going gets tough.

2. *Long-term perspective.* The late Edward Banfield, who was a professor at Harvard University, discovered through research that long-term perspective was the single most accurate predictor of upward social and economic mobility in America. Long-term perspective enables you to keep your eye on the ball, regardless of what life throws your way.

3. *The right people.* Long, hard roads can become discouraging over time. Even for the most dedicated person, life can beat the life out of you and make you want to quit. To remain gritty, surround yourself with people who will coach and encourage you when you’re feeling down and discouraged.

Can-do leaders don’t quit until the job is done. Their grit thrusts them forward when it would be easier to abandon ship.

Reflect and Discuss

1. What struggles in your leadership have tested your grit? How did you remain gritty to the end?
2. Which of the three keys to becoming gritty is most difficult for you? Why?
3. What are we facing in our ministry right now that requires the collective grit of the entire team? How can we encourage and support one another at this critical moment?

Apply

What are you tempted to give up on right now? To increase your grit, answer these three questions:

- What purpose am I trying to accomplish, and what’s at stake if I give up right now?
- What challenges are testing my long-term perspective, and how can I regain my focus?
- Whom can I spend time with this week who would provide some encouragement?



Can-Do Leadership: 8 Qualities of Leaders Who Make It Happen

Grit: I Don't Give Up Until the Job Is Done

Assess: How would you define grit?

“Many of life’s failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.” — Thomas Edison

“Grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future, day in day out, not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years, and working really hard to make that future a reality. Grit is living life like it’s a marathon, not a sprint.” — Angela Lee Duckworth

Three keys to increasing grit:

1. *Inspiring* _____.

Grit requires a purpose that is clear, convincing and compelling.

2. *Long-term* _____.

This enables you to keep your eye on the ball, regardless of what hardship life throws your way.

3. *The right* _____.

To remain gritty, surround yourself with people who will coach and encourage you when you’re feeling down and discouraged.

Apply

What are you tempted to give up on right now? To increase your grit, answer these three questions:

- What purpose am I trying to accomplish, and what’s at stake if I give up right now?
- What major challenges are testing my long-term perspective, and how can I regain my focus?
- Whom can I spend some time with this week who would provide some encouragement?