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### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ Place your new situation in a context that has not previously been articulated to people in the organization.
- ★ Let it be known that you intend to act—and that you expect others to act.
- ★ When people nominate you for the lead, accept it. When you are asked to serve, you can't say no.
- ★ Remember what Hegel wrote: "Growth comes through pain and struggle."
- ★ Early on, stay in the middle of the pack—perhaps even a bit to the rear.
- ★ Once you make up your mind that you are giving yourself, you must be prepared to do anything that serves your cause. You must give yourself fully.
- ★ Listen and follow the lead of the people. Work in groups and make no major policy decisions without the input of other leaders in the organization.
- ★ Step forward and take on responsibility for key management issues.
- ★ Describe your movement as part of a much broader issue. Doing so will inspire sustained involvement of a wide array of individuals.
- ★ Hit the road and garner support for your cause.
- ★ When any major new development occurs, call the people together to inform them.
- ★ Do not sit back and watch when victory is won. Personally lead people into the field.
- ★ When you are confronted with violence, stand up to it. Meet hate with love.



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ Create a blueprint for yourself—one that you can utilize in your future leadership endeavors. Become your own teacher.
- ★ Remember that many issues you have not cleared up intellectually may be solved in the sphere of practical action and experience.
- ★ Love is a potent instrument for social and collective transformation.
- ★ Power without love is reckless and abusive—and love without power is sentimental and anemic.
- ★ Take time to compose a letter or speak on the phone with people who disagree with you.
- ★ Your aim should be to persuade through love, patience, and understanding good will.
- ★ If your words fail, persuade with your acts.
- ★ Take the time to explain why your ideas will work.
- ★ Seek to create a crisis and foster a tension so that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue.
- ★ Remember that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor, it must be demanded by the oppressed.
- ★ Never seek to defeat or humiliate an opponent. Try to bring about a change of heart.
- ★ Remember that only light can put out darkness.
- ★ Meet the forces of hate with the power of love.
- ★ The reason you should not follow the old eye-for-an-eye philosophy is that it ends up leaving everybody blind.

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**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP**

- ★ Don't be afraid to shift gears and make a major career move.
- ★ When you fail to keep people motivated and inspired, they may complain or "throw rocks" in desperation.
- ★ Subject yourself to endless self-analysis so as to be certain that you are fulfilling the true meaning of your work, maintaining your sense of purpose, holding fast to your ideals, and guiding people in the right direction.
- ★ Self-criticism is a sure sign of maturity—and the first step toward eliminating any personal weakness.
- ★ Study constantly even after you leave high school and college.
- ★ Make good use of downtime. Go somewhere so that you may think about things.
- ★ When you go into action and confront your adversaries, you must be as armed with knowledge as they.
- ★ Analyze your adversaries' point of view so that you may see the basic weakness of your condition—so that you may learn and grow from the wisdom of the opposition.
- ★ Forge the priceless qualities of character. Teach your children values at an early age.
- ★ Ensure continuous education of the community in order that support can be maintained.
- ★ Conduct a postmortem analysis of every major endeavor. Share it with other members of your organization. Make a list of things to be done better and use it as a blueprint for future action.
- ★ You must make mistakes and learn from them, make more mistakes and learn anew. You must taste defeat as well as success.
- ★ Remember that time and action are teachers.
- ★ Take action after sober reflection. Learn from bitter experience.

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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ In your public addresses, speak in simple common language—as if you were engaged in a conversation.
- ★ Speaking in the shared language of the community helps establish common ground with your audience.
- ★ Relate stories of individual acts of sacrifice and courage by people in the organization.
- ★ Make extensive use of metaphors, similes, and metaphorical imagery.
- ★ Apply subtle devices—such as rhythm, cadence, alliteration, and anaphora—that enhance the overall impact of a speech.
- ★ Remember that repetition of words and phrases works on the mind of the listener—making your theme and words more memorable.
- ★ Always speak about the hopes and aspirations of the people in your organization with sincerity, seriousness, and simplicity.
- ★ In your oratory, take your cause to a higher level.
- ★ As a leader, you must be concerned with semantics.
- ★ Every revolution must have songs and slogans to add hope to determination—and to fire people, motivate them, and keep them moving.
- ★ You should consciously use the media to raise awareness and get across your key messages.
- ★ The greatest channel of publicity for your organization is the existence of a positive, dynamic, and dramatic public relations program.
- ★ Practice what you preach.

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## AWAKEN DIRECT ACTION

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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP



### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ Take direct action without waiting for other agencies to act.
- ★ If keeping the peace means keeping your mouth shut in the midst of injustice and evil, you should not keep the peace.
- ★ The best leaders are determined, bold, and reject inhibitions imposed by old traditions and habits.
- ★ Stay awake, adjust to new ideas, remain vigilant, and face the challenge of change.
- ★ Do it because it is right to do it.
- ★ Always be prepared to answer the question "What would you do?"
- ★ Sometimes it's necessary to go backward in order to go forward. That's an analogy for life.
- ★ A final victory is an accumulation of many short-term encounters.
- ★ Affirmative action can guide public opinion into constructive channels.
- ★ Never allow the theory that it is better to remain quiet and help the cause to become a rationalization for doing nothing.
- ★ Remember that the chance to act is today. The time is now.
- ★ Nothing will be done until people of good will put their bodies and their souls in motion.
- ★ You must substitute courage for caution.
- ★ Leadership never ascends from the pew to the pulpit, but invariably descends from the pulpit to the pew.

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## 6 / Encouraging Innovation

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### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ Give credit where credit is due.
- ★ You must shun the very narrow-mindedness that has been the source of your organization's past afflictions.
- ★ When faced with an extreme situation, your remedies must be extreme.
- ★ People will work together and sacrifice if they understand clearly why and how the sacrifice will bring about change.
- ★ Never assume that anyone understands. It is your job to keep people informed and aware.
- ★ Any real change in the status quo depends on continued creative action.
- ★ There will be agonizing setbacks with creative advances. Be tolerant of mistakes.
- ★ Creative new endeavors bring people together, unify them, and keep them focused.
- ★ In a new era there must be new thinking.
- ★ A good idea will spread quickly.
- ★ When an emergency ensues and people are in danger—rush to the scene.
- ★ Innovative actions may serve as unifying forces in any movement.
- ★ Creative power can pull down mountains of evil and level hill-tops of injustice.
- ★ You must use time creatively.



### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ The only truly responsible consensus will emerge when grass-roots people know the issues, articulate their demands, and become a part of the democratic process.
- ★ Every alliance must be considered on its own merits.
- ★ A true alliance is based upon some self-interest of each component group and a common interest into which they merge.
- ★ Keeping people together in a team depends upon open channels of communication between the people and their leaders.
- ★ Hold regular retreats (with no more than a dozen people) in a place that is conducive to deep thinking and serious discussion.
- ★ During serious discussions, ask questions, try not to take sides, let everyone debate and discuss—and then attempt to arrive at a consensus.
- ★ People are going to have differences. You should be able to disagree without being disagreeable.
- ★ In a multi-racial society, no group can make it alone.
- ★ Remember, you may be living tomorrow with the very people against whom you are struggling today.
- ★ Don't forget that winning allies is more difficult in the absence of facts.
- ★ A destructive minority can poison the wellsprings from which the majority must drink.
- ★ When one person stands up, he may be run out of town. But when a thousand stand up together the situation is drastically altered.
- ★ Life at its best is a creative synthesis of opposites in fruitful harmony.
- ★ Laws only declare rights, they do not deliver them.

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**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP**

- ★ Create a noble mission around which everyone can rally.
- ★ Set a precise timetable for action.
- ★ Conduct a whirlwind campaign of meetings to mobilize every key person and group behind your movement.
- ★ Put the horse before the cart.
- ★ Clearly state your goals and remember that the simplest approach will prove to be the most effective.
- ★ In setting your goals, don't aim too low—but set something that is achievable.
- ★ Sweeping grandiose goals do not change with time. On the other hand, specific and detailed goals must change as circumstances change.
- ★ Be prepared for a long struggle. Begin modestly.
- ★ When you have the time, respond to unjust criticism.
- ★ Remember that if people go too long without a leader, little if any action will be taken.
- ★ Upon conclusion of a settlement, go out of your way to praise all sides.
- ★ Action is not in itself a virtue; its goals and its forms determine its value.
- ★ The best way to solve any problem is to remove the cause.
- ★ Organize your strength in terms of economic and political power.

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### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ When there is a need to reevaluate and reconsider, hold several retreats to discuss future direction.
- ★ Create a committee that provides you with advice on a regularly scheduled basis.
- ★ Delegate to others the small, day-to-day decisions that keep an organization running.
- ★ When considering major decisions, assemble trusted advisers together and confer with them.
- ★ Remember that the wider range of opinions you hear, the better chance you have of extracting the truth.
- ★ When making a decision, understand the facts, consider various solutions and their consequences, make sure that the decision is consistent with your objectives, and effectively communicate and implement it.
- ★ Remember that nothing pains some people more than having to think.
- ★ Having previously determined goals fosters decision-making.
- ★ You have the responsibility to turn a deaf ear to the shrill cries of the irresponsible few on the lunatic fringe.
- ★ Man's capacity for goodness makes persuasion a very powerful influence, but his inclination toward evil sometimes makes coercion a necessity.
- ★ Remember that people want to be included in decisions that affect their future. This is not a matter of personal power, but one of self-worth.
- ★ Power is the ability to achieve purpose.
- ★ A strong person must be militant as well as moderate; a realist as well as an idealist.
- ★ As a leader, you must move past indecision to action.

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## TEACH AND PREACH

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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP



### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ When there is friction between two important groups in your organization, create a joint initiative involving both and hold daily meetings to beef up communication and increase teamwork.
- ★ When a powerful adversary is creating an unethical and immoral situation, make a deliberate attempt to dramatize the conditions.
- ★ Set up a formal leadership training program in your organization.
- ★ You have to create leaders who embody virtues you can respect, who have moral and ethical principles you can applaud.
- ★ Remember that education gives you not only knowledge, which is power, but wisdom, which is control.
- ★ Intelligence plus character is the goal of true education.
- ★ Don't forget that the law itself is a form of education.
- ★ By raising awareness in a public forum, you are able to educate the entire organization.
- ★ Remember that no work is insignificant.
- ★ A productive and happy life is not something that you find; it is something that you make.
- ★ You have no alternative but to keep moving with determination.
- ★ When necessary, provide people with an outlet to release pent-up emotions and inner tensions.
- ★ Ultimately, the thing that keeps the true fires of your organization burning is the existence of people of good will.

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### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ Take as much time to speak with a floor sweeper as you would a corporate executive.
- ★ If people want to speak with you, take the time to listen. Greet them with a smile and a kind word.
- ★ Put yourself in situations that will enable you to learn the plight and feel the feelings of the people you represent.
- ★ Go to where the action is taking place. Ride to the sound of the guns.
- ★ Don't ride into town, talk the high talk, and then leave. Go down in the trenches and talk to the people.
- ★ Implement people-to-people campaigns and walking tours. Find the heroes in your own organization—and tell their stories.
- ★ Remain calm in the face of violence and adversity.
- ★ There is nothing more powerful to dramatize a social evil than the tramp, tramp of marching feet.
- ★ Achieving results is directly proportional to your willingness and ability to interact with people.
- ★ Remember the words of Gandhi: "There go my people, I must catch them, for I am their leader." In other words, lead by being led.
- ★ Spend time living with the people you represent. Doing so will allow you to understand anew their emotional pressures.
- ★ Remember that a moral question is far more important than a legal one.
- ★ Freedom is never voluntarily granted by the oppressor, it must be demanded by the oppressed.

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## NEGOTIATE AND COMPROMISE

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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP



### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ Appeal to the sense of morality and decency of the people on the other side of the negotiating table.
- ★ When it looks like talks are going to fail miserably, speak up and reassure the opposition that you appreciate their efforts and do not want to end the dialogue.
- ★ Remember that sometimes the threat of action is more effective than the real thing.
- ★ Operate by the law of life that reconciliation is always possible.
- ★ Always be willing to talk and seek fair compromise.
- ★ Establish a documented moral record that relief was sought via negotiation.
- ★ A moderate approach doesn't work. The opposition nails you to the wall and it saps the enthusiasm of followers.
- ★ Do not be afraid of the words "crisis" and "tension." They are innate in all life and all growth.
- ★ Injustices must be brought out into the open where they cannot be evaded.
- ★ Your role as a leader is to communicate to two worlds.
- ★ Measure people's words by their deeds.
- ★ Remember that humanity is waiting for something other than a blind imitation of the past.
- ★ Compromise solutions are steps in the right direction.
- ★ There must be more than a statement to the larger society—there must be a force that interrupts its functioning at some key point.

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## UNDERSTAND HUMAN NATURE

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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP



### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ In the emergence of any new order, you must be willing to confront the onslaught and recalcitrance of the old order.
- ★ Remember that the guardians of the status quo will lash out against the person or organization that they consider most responsible for the emergence of the new order.
- ★ Don't be surprised if the opposition tries to divide your leadership or spread false rumors about you.
- ★ Remember that disappointment may produce despair and bitterness.
- ★ People are not easily moved from their mental ruts or purged of their prejudiced and irrational feelings.
- ★ The first step in the change process is raising awareness. The second step is to involve others in the planning process.
- ★ Extend your plans for change over a broad timeline.
- ★ Remember that unethical people will sacrifice the truth on the altars of self-interest.
- ★ Temper your drum major instinct.
- ★ Freedom is necessary for a person's selfhood and intrinsic worth.
- ★ Remember that noncooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good.
- ★ Victor Hugo once said that progress is the mode of man; that when it is blocked, just as an obstacle in a river makes the water foam, so an obstacle to progress makes humanity seethe.
- ★ Within the best of people there is some evil, and within the worst there is some good.
- ★ People fail to get along with each other because they fear each other—and they fear each other because they don't know each other.
- ★ A movement that changes both people and institutions is a revolution.

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## 1., ON LEADERSHIP

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artin Luther King, Jr.,  
arch 1968

## PREACH HOPE AND COMPASSION

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## MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ You must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.
- ★ When hopes are blasted, violence may set in.
- ★ Hope motivates and inspires. It causes people to take action.
- ★ When you know that people are suffering, fight for them.
- ★ Take the time to write thank-you notes to people who help you.
- ★ Remember the scripture: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone."
- ★ Never sink to the passionless depths of hardheartedness.
- ★ Cut the chain of hatred, as it is too great a burden to bear.
- ★ Remember the words of Gandhi: "There is a limit to the development of the intellect but none to that of the heart."
- ★ Combine a tough mind with a tender heart.
- ★ Even when you are stoned, slapped, and slandered—try to remain optimistic.
- ★ The one thing that keeps the fire of revolutions burning is the ever-present flame of hope.
- ★ Remember that hope really, finally means a refusal to be stopped. It means going on anyhow.
- ★ Every crisis has not only its danger points, but its opportunities.

## MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

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Martin Luther King, Jr.,  
April 3, 1968

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Martin Luther King, Jr.,  
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Martin Luther King, Jr.,  
January 1965

## HAVE THE COURAGE TO LEAD

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## MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ Your job is too great and the days are too bright to be bickering in the darkness of jealousy, deadening competition, and internal ego struggles.
- ★ There is nothing to be afraid of if you believe and know that the cause for which you stand is right.
- ★ Seek to transform your suffering into a creative force.
- ★ Courage breeds self-affirmation. It faces fear and thereby masters it.
- ★ A refusal to be stopped, the courage *to be*, the determination to go on *in spite of*, is the hallmark of great movements.
- ★ Do not be intimidated. Do not be harassed. Do not be silent. Be heard.
- ★ Whenever you see injustice, take a stand against it.
- ★ Remember that the road ahead will not always be smooth. There will be rocky places of frustration and meandering points of bewilderment. There will be inevitable setbacks here and there.
- ★ Whenever you set out to build a temple, you must face the fact that there is a tension at the heart of the universe between good and evil.
- ★ There is no painless way to have a revolution.
- ★ No leader can be great, or even fit for office, if he attempts to accommodate to injustice to maintain his political balance.
- ★ A firm sense of self-esteem is the most powerful weapon against slander and vilification.

## INSPIRE PEOPLE WITH YOUR DREAM

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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP



### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., ON LEADERSHIP

- ★ The road map for your movement may change, but your final destination should remain the same.
- ★ Your organization will prosper or die as a result of your ability to create, embody, and communicate a vision.
- ★ An effective vision may provide an effective mechanism that can truly overcome the natural human tendency to resist change.
- ★ Leadership is more inspiration than administration.
- ★ People derive inspiration from their involvement.
- ★ You can't get people to respond to anything if they aren't stimulated.
- ★ Tie your vision to the human desire for a better tomorrow.
- ★ Call your vision "a dream." It will be more meaningful, more simplistic, and more symbolic.
- ★ Make sure your dream taps into the emotions of the people.
- ★ Your role, in part, is to guide and give direction and philosophical underbuilding to your movement.
- ★ If you can't stop for an average person in your organization, then you don't need to pursue your lofty goals.
- ★ Tell the people that you either go up together, or you go down together.
- ★ The question is not "What will happen to you?" The question is "What will happen to them?"

## *Epilog*

"If you one day find me once said during a mass taliate with a single act protesting with the sar shown so far."

But the feelings of an millions of people after could not be restrained spontaneously erupted in More than sixty thousand out—as were federal troops in London, where the violence subsided, twenty thousand forty-five people had been may have been best called Carmichael: "When white she declared war on us. in our race who was trying compassion, and mercy

President Johnson during King's funeral, Tuesday agencies closed. Flags flying And several hundred thousand was pulled on an old the streets of Atlanta.