



## ***Are You a Worker or a Leader?***

Teacher-workers let other people make their decisions. Teacher-leaders make their own choices. To understand this concept, go to the **Going Beyond** folder for Chapter 22 or scan the QR Code in the book.

There are two kinds of people: **WORKERS** and **LEADERS**. They each have their distinctive characteristics, and these characteristics will lead to certain results in life.

There are two kinds of teachers, too: those who go into teaching because it is a job—teacher-workers—and those **who are committed to making a difference in the lives of their students**—teacher-leaders.

**You can predict your life as a teacher ten, twenty, even thirty years from now based on the characteristics that distinguish between workers and leaders.**

### **The Teacher as a Worker**

**The two things that matter the most to a worker are time and money.** Workers are preoccupied with time for breaks, holidays, overtime, and work hours. They will do anything to negotiate for longer breaks, shorter work hours, and smaller class sizes. There are teachers and teacher organizations that will negotiate away in-service meetings, the number of minutes allocated to such meetings, or to have such meetings on a Friday before a three-day weekend—anything to minimize learning. They plod along because their salaries are determined by how much time and how many years they put into teaching. Time and money, not learning or growing, are the primary concerns of a teacher-worker.

A teacher-worker will agree to put in more hours or agree to in-servicing if there is additional pay or some form of perk. **Money and other tangible rewards are what workers understand.**

**Workers have no future.** Workers who do not increase their skills run the risk of being the first to be laid off or fired because they have failed to stay abreast of changing job skills in a technological society. Workers don't consider possibilities and improvements; they just want to survive the moment. Similarly, there is no future for a teacher who teaches just one way—one way that may be suspect, or inefficient and ineffective.

**In reality, the teacher-worker has already been fired from within the system.** These are the teachers who retired in their own classrooms and have fired themselves from life. These are the teachers to whom early retirement is offered or who are transferred from school to school or job to job so that the damage they do will be minimized, or at least spread evenly and as thinly as possible throughout the district. These are the teachers parents have fired because they complain long and hard to have their children placed with another teacher elsewhere.

**Teaching is used by many teachers as a way to earn money to pay bills and support their families.** Their commitment to teaching stops at the dismissal bell, with no time and little desire to partake of growth and learning opportunities. Compensation is what they want from life.

But if their effectiveness is correlated to compensation, they will fight every effort to measure their effectiveness and be content to just plod along from year to year watching their salaries grow, very slowly, with time. They equate time with money, not effectiveness with money.

## ***Are You a Worker or a Leader?*** (continued)

---

Teacher-workers make no effort to improve their effectiveness. They cannot even define teacher effectiveness. They are not concerned with producing results, even in their own lives. So, if they cannot help themselves, they cannot help others.

**It's your life. You are responsible for your own results.**

### **The Teacher as a Leader**

**The two major concerns of a leader are enhancement and cooperation.**

It is one of the most beautiful compensations in life.  
We can never help another without helping ourselves.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Like workers, leaders have a job and put in time to earn money. But leaders are willing to put in additional time to improve themselves, the people they work with, and the environment in which they work. As a result, leaders also tend to make more money. They make more money not because they put in more time on the job but because they put in more time improving their skills and enhancing their life. **Life rewards the competent, not the clock watchers.**

### **Educational Leaders Work Collaboratively**

Teacher-leaders have the ability to work collaboratively. They work easily with other people and can lead or inspire other people to work constructively and productively. **Anyone who can work collaboratively and productively is always rewarded.**

**Teacher-leaders have careers.** People who are constantly enhancing their professional lives have careers rather than jobs.

#### **Takeaway**

**A job is something a person does to earn a living;  
a career is something a person does to enhance one's own life.**

A person who has a career can do a variety of jobs because through constant learning and growing, the person acquires many talents and skills, as well as flexibility and versatility.

If you will spend an extra hour of study each day in your chosen field,  
you will be a national expert in that field in five years or less.

Earl Nightingale

Earl Nightingale's concept is correct, but the timing is somewhat outdated.

**Knowledge is doubling every twelve months, soon to be every twelve hours.** Buckminster Fuller, with his concept of the "knowledge-doubling curve," noted that until 1900, human knowledge doubled approximately every century. By the end of World War II, knowledge was doubling every twenty-five years.

## ***Are You a Worker or a Leader?*** (continued)

---

Today things are not as simple as that because different types of knowledge have different rates of growth. For example, nanotechnology knowledge is doubling every two years and clinical knowledge every eighteen months. But on average, human knowledge is doubling every thirteen months. The continuing expansion of the “Internet of Things” (IoT) will lead to the doubling of knowledge every twelve hours!

The point is very obvious: successful people continue to learn. You can be an expert in education in less than a year.

Anyone who continues to expand and foster their talents and skills is valuable as a thinker, a problem solver, and a decision maker. These people, it goes without saying, are very valuable to a community, school, or organization and are rewarded for their contributions.

**Teacher-leaders are professionals.** A person who has a career, who has many talents and skills, who is a thinker, a problem solver, and a decision maker is a professional. The professional teacher recognizes that the classroom is a complex environment. The most successful teacher is the one who is capable of managing, making decisions, and solving problems in that environment.

**Teacher-leaders have a career and a future.** People with careers can do many jobs and, should they lose a job, can move more readily to another job because they are qualified and competent. Leaders are not just concerned with time and money; they have their mind set on growing, learning, and working collaboratively with others.

A WORKER is concerned with **time** and **money**.

A LEADER is concerned with **enhancement** and **cooperation**.

A WORKER has a **job**.

A LEADER has a **career**.

A WORKER is hired to **do a job**.

A LEADER is **hired to think, make decisions, and solve problems**.

A WORKER is an hourly **laborer** with a skill.

A LEADER is a lifetime **professional** with talent.

A WORKER **can** be fired from a job.

A LEADER **cannot** be fired from a career.

A WORKER **cannot** find another job because of training in only one job.

A LEADER **can** always find another job because he or she possesses versatile skills.

A WORKER has **no future** in having a job.

A LEADER has a **great future** because he or she is oriented toward a career.

### **Leaders Are in Control**

**Leaders control their own lives and are achievement-oriented.** They produce results—the definition of effective—in others and in themselves.

Happiness is produced not so much by great pieces  
of good fortune that seldom happen  
as by little advantages that occur every day.

Benjamin Franklin

Leaders seek their own means to reach their goals. They do not live for the moment; they live for their goals.

- Life is a series of opportunities.
- Most opportunities come only once in a lifetime.
- An opportunity is a moving target, and the bigger the target, the faster it moves.
- Opportunities always come in when the doors are left open for them.
- Research shows that if you do not use an idea or an opportunity within three days, you will never use it.
- And if you use it within twenty-four hours, you are more likely to integrate it permanently.

**Seize the moment today and every day.**