

Navigating The Early Seasons

Workbook for Audio Workshop Collection

Dr. Tim Waters

About Your Host

Tim Waters earned degrees in music from Furman University and The University of Georgia. Though known in the band world as a composer and arranger of music for halftime shows, parades and concerts, Dr. Waters also spent 10 years in church music. Those years in church music leadership had an administrative focus, which included the organizing of music personnel for Victory Christian Center, a large televised church in Tulsa, Oklahoma. This position also included responsibilities as director of that church's school of worship.

This last decade's experiences as a full-time college music professor, combined with those earlier years' experience, have given Tim insights into some common challenges and expectations of the newer leader. It is his prayerful hope that new leaders can benefit from his past mistakes and from his advice, helping to pave the way for successful seasons of effective leadership.

Tim currently serves in the roles of Professor of Music and Music Technology Coordinator at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He also contributes musical arrangements as a composer and arranger with Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation. Dr. Waters also enjoys connecting with younger leaders in personal discussions, group settings and in public appearances. His personal time is spent enjoying life with his family, which includes his wife Christy and kids, David and Hannah.

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Table of Contents

Session 1 - Foundations

- I. Learning to Navigate
- II. The Early Days
- III. Your Leadership Has 4 Main Levels

Session 2 - Perspectives

- I. Your Leadership Is Bigger Than You Are
- II. It's Not All About Me
- III. About This Workshop Collection

Session 3 - Finding Out Who's Who

- I. Introduction
- II. The Hierarchy of Here
- III. Building The Right Bridges

Session 4 - Levels of Leaders, Part 1

- I. Dealing With Multiple Bosses
- II. Navigating Well With All Supervisors
- III. No Leaders Under Your Own Leadership?

Session 5 - Levels of Leaders, Part 2

- I. Specifics
- II. Communicating With Leaders Above You
- III. Cooperating With Leaders Above You

Session 6 - Learning The Culture

- I. Introduction
- II. Being Here
- III. The Culture of Here

Session 7 - Learning The History of Here

- I. Accomplishments of the Organization
- II. Failures of the Organization
- III. Water Under the Bridge
- IV. Following the Leader

Session 8 - The Family Business—Extra Grace Required

- I. Staffing Deficiencies
- II. Allegiances and Alliances

Session 9 - Fitting In, Part 1

- I. The Conformist
- II. The Rebel
- III. The Eager Beaver

Session 10 - Fitting In, Part 2

- I. The Apathetic One
- II. The Bull in a China Shop
- III. Taking the Middle Road
- IV. Be True to Yourself

Session 11 - Seeing The Early Seasons Properly

- I. Introduction
- II. The Back Door of the Palace
- III. Small Beginnings

Session 12 - Here to Serve

- I. The Test of Availability
- II. Checking Your Own Motives
- III. A Final Word

Session 1 - Foundations

- For free worksheets for these workshops: www.drtw.net/newleader

I don't claim to be an expert on the topic of leadership, but my years in church work and years as a college professor have taught me lots of things. If I can help new leaders avoid unnecessary mistakes, then I feel that it's well worth our time to go through these sessions together. This collection of leadership workshops, *Navigating The Early Seasons*, is built around brief, focused sessions that are designed to help you get the most out of your leadership sessions now and in the near future.

- Free, foundational podcast episodes, *The 4 Levels of Leadership*, under Welcome To Your Leadership in the iTunes Store.
- The free worksheets for those sessions are also at www.drtw.net/newleader.
- On Facebook under Welcome To Your Leadership.

I. Learning to Navigate

1. Philippians 1:6: He Who began a good work in you will bring it to _____. (ESV)
2. This is such a comforting verse, knowing that God will not only get us started on our leadership journey, but will be faithful to see us through each session of our lives as _____.

II. The Early Days

It's assumed that in the beginning you'll be working for an established organization, since most people start that way. Usually, in existing organizations, new leaders are brought in and trained for success. There are supposed to be seasons of learning and hopefully being mentored before you're in charge of a larger thing. But sadly, statistics show that not only do many new leaders misunderstand the bigger picture and how to succeed in it, but also the organizations they join often don't do all that could be done to train those new leaders along the way.

3. Understand that the early days of your leadership can have a big _____ on the seasons that follow.
4. This is especially true if you end up staying in the same place for a number of years.
5. But these _____ seasons of your leadership can end up being some of the best you'll ever have if you approach them the right way.
6. To help get you started, I've broken things down into a very few simple _____.

III. Your Leadership Has 4 Main Levels

7. Understand that you and your followers will get the most from your leadership if you can _____ the levels as you go through each one:
 - a. Level 1, Personal _____
 - b. Level 2, Team _____
 - c. Level 3, _____ Leadership
 - d. Level 4, _____

Briefly, here's how each level works:

Level 1 - Personal Success (aka Personal Leadership or Personal Victory)

- 8. It's not about being perfect or having arrived, but it's about first leading _____ well.
- 9. This level may involve some minor adjustments for you, or it may mean having to take a long, hard look at where you help yourself and where you hurt yourself, but if you want to be an effective leader, this level can't be _____.

Level 2 - Team Asset

- 10. This level is about more than just _____ a team.
- 11. It's about becoming a person who adds value to that team, in the process helping the team become all it's supposed to be.

Level 3 - Team Leadership

- 12. Anyone can simply give orders and boss others around.
- 13. But Christian leaders are called to _____ the people they lead, so that things get better for the team and everyone on it.
- 14. True leadership is about building up the _____ as you build up the team.

Level 4 - Multiplication

- 15. Once I can be trusted with leading a single team, then over time I will get the chance to train up other teams and _____ of teams.
- 16. And then my growing experience helps me get better and better at _____ more than one thing at a time.

Reminder

Those 4 levels are explained in greater detail in those 4 free podcasts on the iTunes Store, under Welcome To Your Leadership.

Next up: Session 2, *Perspectives*.

Optional Discussion:

- 1. Which leadership levels have you already experienced up to this point?
- 2. Can you tell which leadership level(s) you might be in right now?
- 3. Which level(s) do you see best fitting your personality?
- 4. Which level(s) do you see best fitting your talents and abilities?

Session 2 - Perspectives

I. Your Leadership Is Bigger Than You Are

[Time on the walking trail.]

Some are so lost in their own world that they're a little dangerous to the rest of us on the trail. You can tell that they're distracted or self-focused when they step out in front of bikers and almost cause accidents. One of the things that people either know when stepping onto the trail or later learn the hard way is that the path is not just about them. And it's the same way in leadership.

II. It's Not All About Me

1. If it's all about me, then there will be some _____ and even collisions along the way.
2. If it's all about me, then I will probably have the wrong attitude about new _____ and opportunities.
3. And, if it's all about me, I won't be very effective in the way I lead other _____, not over the long haul.
4. Others are watching, and following your _____.
5. While it's ok to make mistakes here and there, our followers need to know that we're not overly focused on ourselves and our own needs.
6. They need to know that we are here to lead them, but that we also _____ about them along the way.
7. And let's also consider that this season is also bigger than the here and now.
8. If you do it right as a leader, then there are other potential leaders who you may inspire toward their own _____ one day.

• A great scripture for this moment is 1 Corinthians 11:1, in which Paul says, Imitate me, then, just as I imitate Christ. (GNT)

• What a great reminder for how things are really supposed to work in our leadership!

III. About This Workshop Collection

This collection is aimed at Christian leaders who are probably new in leadership or maybe just in a new place and getting used to it. I will address some specific situations that often occur in places where ministry happens. But I don't mean to keep anyone else from picking up some ideas and concepts here. While the worlds of business, education and entertainment may not always allows us to fully share our faith and beliefs, it's very possible to effectively use some of the concepts in this collection in areas outside church and ministry. But as always when navigating in secular environments, I advise you to be wise and exercise caution.

Whether you find yourself serving inside a ministry environment or somewhere else, there's no way to cover every situation you might encounter. But each of these sessions is designed to offer you some insights and some new ideas that could save you some mistakes along the way. I highly recommend going through the entire collection. It's ok if you need to step through each one slowly, so that you digest all the info over time. Take it at your own pace so that you can be comfortable absorbing all these ideas and suggestions.

Reminder

• Free, foundational podcasts that I mentioned can be found at www.drwtw.net/newleader & also on the iTunes Store under Welcome To Your Leadership.

Next up: Session 3, *Finding Out Who's Who*.

Optional Discussion:

1. What are some of the downsides of leadership that keep a leader's focus on himself?
2. What are some positive things that could happen when a leader moves beyond self focus?
3. Can you identify other areas in life that tend to cause too much focus on self?
4. If so, can you draw any lessons or conclusions for your own leadership journey?

Session 3 - Finding Out Who's Who

I. Introduction

- This third section talks about learning the specific people and roles of the place you're now in.
1. From the first day you walk through the door, it helps to be _____ of the opportunities that lie ahead of you.
 2. These early days may have a big _____ on how things go for you in the long run.
 3. If you're not careful, it's all too easy to step on toes, even as you're still making introductions and meeting _____.
 4. You're no doubt bringing in with you exciting new ideas, or at the very least a new set of eyes and ears.
 5. While it's great to be excited and ready to go with lots of energy and new thoughts, it's important to know the difference between knowledge and _____.
 6. Knowledge is a great asset in your leadership tool belt.
 7. Learn all you can in the areas that matter to your _____.
 8. But wisdom is knowing when and where to _____ that knowledge, so that things don't backfire on you.
 9. And wisdom can also help you know which conversations fit which people, as well as conversations that should be avoided or _____ for later.
- James 1:5: If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. (ESV)
10. Operating from a place of wisdom will make you even more _____ as a leader in these early seasons.

II. The Hierarchy of Here

11. Hierarchy is just another word for knowing who is in _____ of whom.
12. A wise thing to do early on is to find out as much as you can about how that works in the place you're now serving.

A. Learn The Pecking Order

13. Who is in charge and in which _____?
14. Who is your boss's supervisor?
15. Who has the last _____ for the whole organization? Or in your area?
16. Knowing this kind of information can help you right away in 2 areas:
 - a. It helps you see the big picture more _____.
 - b. It helps you see where you fit inside that big picture.
17. But on the practical side, knowing all this can also help you avoid _____ mistakes, such as taking an issue to your supervisor's boss without keeping your boss in the loop.
18. In extreme cases, you may need to go to that supervisor in a discreet way to share a grievance or concern.
19. But assuming that everyone is behaving in appropriate ways, it's best to stay within the chain of _____.
20. And so it may take more work on your end, but doing your homework here will help keep you in better graces with those _____ relationships all around you.

III. Building The Right Bridges

21. There are vital _____ you're going to need if your leadership journey is going to go well.

22. And you really never know where some of the connections of today could lead later on in your journey.

23. Some practical tips:

- a. Be sure to introduce yourself to everyone you can, from the highest bosses to the lowest levels of _____.
- b. If I get to know those higher up the ladder in this season, then those people will be more comfortable with me when the time comes for me to be _____.
- c. But if I also get to know the janitors, maintenance personnel and security folks, then when I need help quickly, I'll know exactly who to ask.
- d. In the process, I'm showing everyone around me that I'm _____ and approachable, which are vital qualities in a Christian leader.

The more strong bridges you build around yourself, the better. No one ever said you have to like your boss or be his or her best friend. Some bosses are gracious and easy to work with while some are not. But regardless of the kind of boss you end up with, you can still purpose to stay respectful and professional.

24. And you can decide to be as productive and _____ as possible in the role you're now in.

Next up: Session 4, *Levels of Leaders, Part 1*.

Optional Discussion:

1. Is there any area of life or leadership we can't take before God?
2. Does God always know more about the solutions we need for leadership success?
3. Are you already building the right bridges and finding out who's who were you now serve?
4. Do you see room for improvement?
5. If so, what is your plan?

Session 4 - Levels of Leaders, Part 1

1. The more you know about the leadership _____ of the organization you serve, the better sense you'll have of where you fit into things.
2. And it can help you better understand where your _____ fit into things, so that you better understand why things work the way they do here in this place.
3. The best way to navigate through all this is with the right _____.
4. Are you as willing to serve those above you as much as you're willing to serve the team that's following you?
5. For some new leaders hearing this, this season may be the first time to have to _____ to another person's leadership in a work environment.
6. Our supervisors usually have a chain of command and accountability as we go up the leadership ladder.
7. But in reality we're all _____ to God as we navigate through ministry leadership.
8. Remember that ultimately God has the last word in any given situation.
9. Continue presenting ideas and requests to your supervisors, but don't forget to take them to God in your _____ time as well.

I. Dealing With Multiple Bosses

10. While you may have been appointed to a position as a leader, remember that some situations involve higher levels of leaders who oversee _____ of leaders.
11. And though some will see you as their immediate supervisor, you are still on a team of leaders, all answering to someone higher.
12. Further, just because you're in charge of an area, it doesn't mean you will always have the last _____.

A. Which Boss Has the Last Word?

Your supervisor may have one or more bosses, farther up the leadership ladder. This means that your boss may not have the last word on things that matter to you. But don't let this become a source of frustration. Just keep praying and do all you can to stay in God's rest and peace. But eventually you may find yourself stuck between 2 bosses. Now what?

13. Here are my thoughts, and you may also find a better approach as you move forward:
 - a. Try to get as much _____ going as possible.
 - b. Avoid taking sides if at all possible.
 - c. Present your situation as asking for _____ rather than assuming someone involved was doing something intentional against you.
 - d. If things still don't get resolved, then continue to commit the situation to prayer and give it time.

II. Navigating Well With All Supervisors

14. Just because you answer to a single boss or supervisor, be aware that you may be _____ by others around and above that boss.
15. In fact, this season may actually be your _____ for higher levels of leadership later on.

16. It's very possible that decision makers are watching you, and asking themselves silent questions:
- Can this person handle pressure and _____?
 - Is this person a true _____, or is she selfish?
 - Is this guy mature enough to be discreet with _____ information?
 - Will this person submit to _____, or will promotion only make small issues bigger?
17. Those leaders above you are still making _____, too, so you don't have to be perfect.
18. Thankfully God has enough grace for those times when our best efforts still miss the _____.
- But it also pays to be aware that the here and now have a lot to do with your leadership road that lies ahead.
19. A good overall approach to consider is that you're constantly being evaluated for potential promotion, so it pays to stay on your toes and present your _____ self.

And to clarify, I'm not suggesting that it's all about being promoted. Sure, there are perks that come with that higher level, but there are also more headaches and responsibility. But when God is pleased with how we're navigating through our leadership journey, then eventually he wants us to be able to impact more people with those good things in our lives. That's what makes it so vital to be willing and ready for those opportunities to go higher.

III. No Leaders Under Your Own Leadership?

It's easy enough to get used to having followers around who see you as their leader. You lead and they follow. That's mostly how it works. But also be aware that there can't just be followers in order to keep track of everything and get it all done. You may have inherited some existing leaders in your area, or there may not be any. Volunteer organizations like churches and ministries usually have several or many more volunteer leaders involved. For this season of your leadership it may be time to create some new leaders, officially or not.

20. When you share the leadership _____ you help yourself and others.
21. You help yourself by not burning out, trying to get it all done alone.
22. Especially in a volunteer organization like a church, you have to find a _____ in things.
23. You don't want to end up doing everything yourself and risk burning out or closing doors of opportunity for other people.
24. But you also help others by giving them the chance to _____, possibly starting their own personal leadership journeys.
25. Have a conversation with your supervisor, so that things are done the right way.
26. Some things to consider:
- There's the _____ of this place— "how things are done here."
 - There's the corporate culture, which helps me understand my _____ in this place.
 - But there are also practical concerns. We can't always just mix all kinds of people together, especially in a church or ministry situation.
 - There are some who need to be _____ from others who might not mix well.
 - This includes protecting kids from certain people.
 - It also includes having _____ settings for mixing together with the opposite sex.
27. Having a proactive conversation with your supervisor in the beginning can help avoid bad results later on.

28. And this first meeting will probably open the door to other leaders and their areas, which is very _____.
29. It's always a good idea to be on the same page with the rest of the leadership team, with the added benefit of not having to reinvent the wheel.
30. You can and should have other leaders within your _____ of leadership, but it's always better to start the right way.

Next up: Session 5, *Levels of Leaders, Part 2*.

Optional Discussion:

1. Do you see your options clearly when it comes to navigating among the leaders above you?
2. Is there a need to raise up or organize leaders that will answer to you?
3. If so, is your plan ready for moving forward?
4. Do you have someone trusted who can listen and offer feedback before you move ahead?

Session 5 - Levels of Leaders, Part 2

[The grandparents' baby names story.]

• The moral of that story is this: a new grandbaby can get away with things you and I can't.

1. When in doubt, ask for _____.

I. Specifics

• As you're finding out who's who in this place, here are some guidelines that err on the side of respect:

2. Don't _____ that it's ok to call an older person or a supervisor by his or her first name.

• You're helping yourself when you find out who likes to be addressed on a first-name basis and who doesn't.

3. Some people prefer being called by the _____ they have, like Doctor, Pastor, or something similar.

• It's good to better understand this dynamic in the place where you serve.

4. If you start out being too _____ or familiar with certain people, you've already offended before you get going with things.

• It's better to ask for permission to be casual first. Why?

5. Because a younger leader could be assumed to be more brash, _____ or even cocky.

6. When you assume that you're already pals with a person you should be demonstrating respect for, then you play right into those _____ stereotypes.

• You might be thinking to yourself, *But I don't get into all that yessir, yes ma'am stuff.*

7. Be yourself. But you help yourself by finding a way to be _____.

• I've had college-aged students who wanted to call me by my first name in front of the other students.

• Good intentions or not, that often doesn't play well in certain situations, and an older supervisor may feel as awkward as I do when put in that situation.

8. Realize that when you assume things in those kinds of situations, you're begging to be _____.

9. On the other hand, some folks who are older than you may want to be called by their first names, simply because they resent the fact that they're growing _____.

10. It all depends on the culture, and it all depends on the people involved.

11. When in doubt, ask for that all-important _____.

II. Communicating With Leaders Above You

• Because the leaders above you are busy people with great responsibility, you're helping them while helping yourself if you can approach things the right way.

12. Here are some tips to help this go well for you:

a. Be ready to communicate in a _____ way.

• Headlines work better than full stories.

• Bullet points work better than full paragraphs. If a boss wants more information than your headlines, then he/she can ask for it as needed.

b. Leaders above you expect _____.

• Careful with things discussed behind closed doors.

- When in doubt, ask the supervising leader for guidance in a given matter.
- c. Find out which _____ of communication best fits each leader above you, so you'll know whether it's better to use email, text, personal meetings, or something else altogether.
- d. Another way to help the communication go well is to learn the _____ of those above you.

Understand that certain people's personalities may not be as clear as they should be when asking for things to get done. Make sure a supervisor's request was not just a passing comment. It may actually be a serious directive with an expectation to see you accomplish it.

- e. Learn the _____ of communication among those above you.
 - Most leaders don't appreciate new ideas and complicated conversations right before a big meeting, or during stressful events.

13. It's better to save some conversations until you know your boss is relaxed, and not distracted or feeling _____.

14. It also helps to be proactive and offer updates to those leaders above you on things you've been _____.

15. It's better to have a leader decline your update than for her to assume you haven't been _____ in getting things done.

III. Cooperating With The Leaders Above You

- Matthew 10:16 says this: Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. (ESV)

Most would agree that this is great advice for the Christian, helping us to remember the proper way to navigate forward in life. And it always helps to pray for God's wisdom as we move through our various seasons as leaders. But let's think about this in relation to cooperating with those leaders who oversee your leadership. You want to keep the best rapport you can with those above you. The stronger those bridges are now, the easier it is to handle the ups and downs that will eventually come.

16. To help you work through this area, here are some realities to consider as you begin to cooperate and collaborate:

a. Being helpful and cooperative does not necessarily equal being a _____-man, going along with anything and everything that happens.

b. But being overly helpful can undermine the _____ you want from those above you and those following you.

- It's ok to compliment a boss now and then, but realize that overdoing this could make you seem insincere.

c. Being _____ or uncooperative all the time isn't good either.

- This is not a sign of personal strength.

d. Being difficult doesn't produce the respect we want. Too often it only produces _____.

e. If you don't get used to working with and submitting to the _____ figures above you, then your leadership journey could become a painful road to travel, and it could even end prematurely, with you on the outside looking in.

- A wild stallion is an impressive thing to watch, but it doesn't really help anyone else if it refuses to be bridled.
- f. It's ok and even expected that you will stand your ground here and there on some things, but pick your battles _____.
- g. When it comes to offering input, or especially constructive _____, a young leader may want to make sure the door is open for sharing, and here's why:

When a younger leader offers this kind of input to a more established leader above, it can hit the upper leader as a rebuke or even as a slap in the face, even if you offered it in an appropriate way. For this reason it's often best to wait until the input is requested, and even then it's best to step lightly until you're more established.

- h. When you start any relationship, the other person usually sees you with a full relational _____ account.

Remember that as you and leaders above you work together day after day, you'll need to put relational money back into that account every time you make a withdrawal. This is how healthy working relationships stay on track, with healthy give and take.

17. It may take some time to find the right _____ for where you are, but that's normal.
18. You'll eventually figure out what best fits your situation. And, when in doubt, ask others for _____ on how you're doing.
19. Being proactive and _____ in your communication *and* cooperation with those leading you is a good sign that you're on the right track.

Next up: Session 6, *Learning the Culture*.

Optional Discussion:

1. Are there people in your leadership world who leave you feeling unclear about how to address them?
2. Need to resolve or clarify things?
3. How is the communication going in your area?
4. Are you able to keep the discreet things to yourself?
5. Are you finding yourself to be a good steward with the information in your world?

Session 6 - Learning The Culture

I. Introduction

1. This session is all about the culture in which you now find yourself _____.
2. By *culture* I mean the kind of environment you're now in.
3. Every culture has its own distinct _____.
4. First there's the _____ culture, whether you're serving at a mission base, a school, or a church.
5. And of course environments outside ministry settings have their own different culture, too.
6. Generally speaking, you'll find that similar organizations will have some similar features, regardless of region or _____.
7. For example, you may see that many Christian schools use student uniforms for their dress code.
8. But beyond the expected culture, there's also the _____ culture of this location.
9. And being aware of those specific parts of this culture's _____ can help you get the most out of this leadership season.

II. Being Here

10. While you may see some similarities between the place you're in now and other places like it, there are still things that set this place _____.
11. It could be the region you're in, the mix of ethnicities or people groups, or maybe it has more to do with the personality of the top _____ here.
 - Psalm 37:23: The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, And He delights in his way. (KJV)
12. So if you're a leader who is following after Jesus Christ, then it's only natural that he would play a key _____ in you being here in this place and at this time.
13. In fact, it's very possible that God has matched you with this place and this culture for a _____.
14. There could be some talent, trait or quality within you that fits this place _____ than anyone else at this time.
15. And because God very often matches up people with locations and organizations, it pays to look around and realize how much has gone into your being here right now.

III. The Culture of Here

In Session 3 we talked about the *hierarchy* of here. Now we're focusing on the *culture* of here. What kind of culture are you noticing so far in this place? Is the culture you're now in casual and laid back or is it tense and hectic? Do things change quickly, slowly, or do they seem to stay mostly the same? Are new ideas welcome in this culture? Every culture has its own personality and disposition.

[*The dynamics of various cultures.*]

16. Again, every place has its own distinct _____.
17. Sometimes that distinction can be a blessing, and sometimes it can be a _____.
 - I encourage you to not let your place's culture keep you from accomplishing all you're here to do.
18. God has all the wisdom we'll ever need when we're faced with _____ or unusual cultures.

19. The key is in continuing to _____ with him on a regular basis.

- Be careful not to assume too much about [this culture] in the early seasons.
- For example, don't let the ages of the people trick you into assuming things about the culture.

20. Keeping an open _____ is key while you navigate forward.

Next up: Session 7, *Learning the History of Here*.

Optional Discussion:

1. Do you see any evidence to support the idea of God matching you specifically with this place where you now serve?
2. Can you offer specifics to confirm things?
3. Have you begun to see the specific culture of this place?
4. Can you verbalize it in order to explain it to someone from the outside?
5. Can you communicate that summary in a way that doesn't offend those who hold it near and dear to their hearts?

Session 7 - Learning The History of Here

One way to help your own leadership success is in doing your homework about this place where you now serve. The more you know about the culture and history of this place, the better you can navigate forward. Some might think, *Well, I'm a new person with new ideas, fresh energy and lots of potential. Why would I care what's already happened in the past? I'm here to create some new history.* While it's great to come in and create some of your own history, you're now connected to people who probably already have some history of their own in this place. It would be highly insensitive for a new leader to assume that none of that has any impact on the here and now.

I. Accomplishments of the Organization

1. It's important to know what has been accomplished here, since those were moments of success and _____.
2. Those are probably cherished memories for the people you're now with, so it helps to understand as much of this as possible.
3. When you ask about this area, and the person leans back, looks at the ceiling and begins to wax eloquent about the glory days of this place, show your _____ and pay attention.
4. This is not only a great opportunity to find out some important information, but it's also a great chance to make a strong _____ with this person.
5. Learn all you can about what has been celebrated here, since it can only help your _____ in this place.

II. Failures of the Organization

6. Have there been times of _____ or failure that left a cloud over this place?
7. Knowing this kind of info can also be very helpful for your success.
8. It may be more difficult to find out about this side of things, and it may be a more _____ challenge to have these discussions, but they are worth pursuing.

[Illustration: Car up on blocks with tall grass growing around it.]

It may look like an easy fix to you, since you're new here. Just throw the old car away, right? My advice here is to proceed with caution. Why? Because people's tender emotions may still be in play here. It may be difficult or even excruciating to have these kinds of conversations, but you're helping yourself by going there.

9. Here are some reasons why it matters:
 - a. What if the person you're replacing left suddenly or under _____ circumstances?
 - b. What if no one was going to offer that bit of vital information to you if you hadn't asked some questions?
 - c. What if that person _____ over some organizational problems that were happening, but no one warned you about that either?
10. You may discover other items worth _____ once you start asking some questions.
11. But it will be worth it, since you're not only becoming more informed for your own leadership success, but you're also learning about areas where the people here could use some _____ and even healing.

III. Water Under the Bridge

Beyond the public side of where this organization has succeeded and failed, it's also helpful to know internal things. This information is important, since these events may have had a big impact on the way things are now. Have times been peaceful and cooperative between areas or specific people? Or have there been times of major strife and bickering? It's good to know this kind of thing for your own season of leadership success here.

[My story: Past issues between the music and audio departments.]

12. It would have been nice for me to know about that difficult situation ahead of time, and being _____ here can help you, too.

13. I'm not suggesting that you participate in gossip or stir up old wounds, but the more you can find out about the internal _____ climate in the place you're now in, the better.

IV. Following The Leader

14. It's also important to know if as a leader you're following in the steps of a _____ person.

15. Many times a person can be less than an effective leader yet still connect with people so well that it makes it hard for anyone to take his or her place now that a _____ has happened.

16. But this is even more important for you to understand if the person was also great at what he did because people can't help but make _____ between that person and you, the new guy.

17. Too often a new leader sees this situation as a personal _____.

- Her attitude might be, *Hey, that's great that she was a living legend here, but watch what I can do!*

18. As new leaders, we have to find a way to temper all that energy and approach things in an _____ way.

- And it's also important to know about what you face by making changes here.

19. Even if your ideas and improvements are wonderful, it will still take _____ to navigate forward.

20. To help you see things from your followers' perspective, consider these things that are at work as you settle in here:

a. Don't be _____ when the people here aren't thrilled with you right away.

b. They may be still dealing with the loss of the one you've replaced, even if the transition was a good one.

c. We both know that God has made you to be _____, special and wonderful in your own way.

d. But sometimes all your great qualities can only make matters _____.

I've followed great leaders and I've followed some who weren't so great. Sometimes there's nothing you can do but be yourself and keep moving forward, at the same time being sensitive to the people around you who are trying to adjust to the new season. So, as you can see, the more you know about the history of here, the better prepared you can be in helping things move forward.

Next up: Session 8, *The Family Business—Extra Grace Required*.

Optional Discussion:

1. Do you have a grasp of the accomplishments of this place?
2. Do you have a grasp of the failures of this place?
3. Do you have an understanding of the positive and negative history of those who were here when you arrived?
4. Are you sensing the emotional landscape created by the departure of the person you may have replaced?
5. If so, are you hearing and seeing the path forward for yourself?

Session 8 - The Family Business—Extra Grace Required

Companies and ministries are often led by families. The same family will have various members in key leadership roles. There's no reason why you can't succeed in a culture that has members of the same family leading things. But you can help yourself by understanding some of these dynamics ahead of time.

I. Staffing Deficiencies

1. When a family is at the top of an organization, it's very common for those top, most important _____ to be filled by members of that family.
2. But it's also common to see that same family needing some _____ in covering certain roles or areas.
3. Often a family-run operation will hire people specifically to cover those roles the family can't always take on.
4. You may find yourself covering one of these roles because of some talent or _____ you have.
5. Understand that when you're brought in to help under these circumstances, you may be viewed in a few different ways.
6. How you may be viewed:
 - a. The Prized _____ - few people can do what you do or know what you know, so you may be considered the expert here.
 - b. _____ to a Family Member - you could be helping out in this area because of your expertise, or there could be other factors, such as these:
 1. You may have the ability to put that family leader at ease, so you're trusted to work in _____ areas.
 2. You may represent a certain demographic, ethnicity or _____ strength.
 3. You may be the person that the family leader _____ things to, simply because things work well that way.
 - c. "the guy/girl who takes care of that" - this could be any number of things, but it leads to people thinking of you when there is a need in that _____.
7. Regardless of how or why you've ended up in this situation, understand that your success in this kind of role will continue to depend on your ability to keep doing it _____.
8. So it pays to understand why you are where you are, and then keeping your _____ on it.

II. Allegiances and Alliances

When families are seen as the leaders, it's only natural that people would be drawn to them. And it's common that the various family members will each attract different kinds of people to their leadership. It can be healthy to see all that variety and diversity of people groups working alongside those family leaders. But because we're all human, it's only natural that eventually certain camps form around those leaders. Sometimes these groupings are helpful and sometimes they can get in the way. It's usually not the fault of the family.

9. But sometimes individuals in these different camps can cause _____, and often the family leaders are unaware of the dynamics around them.
10. For example, the leaders may not always sense those near them who can often feed off the _____ that comes with being allied with the top leadership.

11. Sometimes these allegiances and alliances can _____ the leadership influence of those family leaders.
12. But just as often those in that circle can actually drive away some of the very people the leader is trying to _____.
13. Some new leaders who have never been faced with this kind of environment may have a hard time getting past this, since it may feel less than _____.
14. And when this kind of situation is causing lots of issues, things can also feel far removed from the work of the _____.

Not everyone can handle being put in this position as a leader, or in this kind of workplace. So it's a good idea to think through this before you find yourself in this situation, so you'll know how to respond if you're ever asked to step into something like this. But if you end up saying yes to this special environment, it will pay to be wise.

15. Some other situations that could occur:

- a. Even when the various alliances are all working well together, families who lead often bring their _____ dynamics to the workplace, and you may find yourself caught in the middle of some situations you didn't expect.
 1. I encourage you to not let yourself take _____ when disputes happen.
 2. Take the higher road, since it's hard to always predict how this kind of thing can go.
- b. Be aware that some people are so connected to the family in charge that they seem to be family _____ themselves.
 1. Because of this the lines can become _____.
 2. But be encouraged that if God needs to assign you to an organization run by a family, there will be the extra _____ you need in order to navigate that season well also.

Next up: Session 9, *Fitting In, Part 1*.

Optional Discussion:

1. Do you feel you were brought in to fill a deficiency, or was your role created specifically for you?
2. Have you begun to assess the alliances and allegiances in this place?
3. Can you discern where you fit within that terrain?

Session 9 - Fitting In, Part 1

You may feel that you're one of a kind, with unique ideas and plans. And you're right about that! But we all still have to work with other people, at least to some degree. Sometimes our roles stretch us in some new ways. And sometimes the role leaves us bored and unchallenged, though some of this depends on our attitude about the role.

1. God may have put you into this place to help you work through some issues or _____ you wouldn't have noticed otherwise.
2. At any rate, others are watching you navigate through things, and what they see may have an _____ on your success later on.

I. The Conformist

3. I've met people who tell me that they are naturally compliant in working situations.
4. They know how to _____ and fit in, and this is often very easy for this type of person.
5. Sometimes upper leaders naturally gravitate to this kind of person, since reaching _____ and getting things done is usually pretty smooth.
6. The downside with this approach is that The Conformist may not be willing to speak up when _____ things need to be said.

II. The Rebel

As we already covered in Session 4, there's a level of submission everyone has to come to terms with. But some people seem to bristle at the thought of submitting to anyone. Because of this they have a difficult time adjusting to working for someone else. Understand the costs involved in playing the part of The Rebel.

7. While it's ok to disagree from time to time and take a stand when you feel strongly about things, if you continue to not play nicely with others, then you may one day find yourself all alone or even on the _____, wondering what happened.
8. There's a real difference between being a person who stands up for important things as opposed to just being a _____ person.
9. You really _____ yourself if you can decide now which one you're going to be.

III. The Eager Beaver

Some leaders love to meet the Eager Beaver, especially if he's also a Conformist. Leaders love to hand the ball to this guy and let him run with it. But if the Eager Beaver begins to show that he has his own agenda he can quickly lose the trust of the leaders around him.

10. Some eagerness is taken as a _____ thing, especially if it supports the leadership of the leaders above and around you.
11. Some eagerness is also seen as being _____ to the mission or vision of the organization you're now serving.
12. But some eagerness is not taken well at all, depending on the situation.

13. Here are some examples:

- a. A person who is so eager to move forward that she creates problems and bad _____ for her supervisors.
- b. A guy who runs ahead and promises things his bosses haven't _____ yet.
- c. And finally, the new leader who runs ahead without taking the time to bring his _____ along.

14. Being the Eager Beaver is fine, as long as you demonstrate that you don't have a _____ agenda.

Next up: Session 10, *Fitting In, Part 2*.

Optional Discussion:

- 1. Do you see yourself in any of the traits just mentioned?
- 2. Do you see any of those traits in others around you?
- 3. Can you pinpoint areas where these traits have helped or hindered so far?

Session 10 - Fitting In, Part 2

Let's keep going with our six approaches and profiles.

I. The Apathetic One

It might have been socially acceptable in your younger days to act like you don't care or that you'd rather be somewhere else. But this doesn't work once you become a leader of other people, and especially in church or ministry situations. Though this is so common in secular settings, in ministry settings people are rarely impacted in a good way by this approach. Have you ever been in line at the post office, a store or some other place where the person working at the counter didn't seem to want to be there?

[Big-box store manager with the wrong attitude.]

1. This is how it can feel to those people who need our compassion and leadership if our own attitude isn't _____.
2. It may sound like a trite thing to say, but it's very true: People will respond to you better if you have an attitude of _____.
3. This doesn't mean you have to be perfect or that you can never have a bad day.
4. But like it or not, as a Christian who is also a leader, you are a _____ for the Christian faith.
5. People should want what you have, and not _____ you because of an attitude.
6. As Christian leaders our job is to help and _____ others.
7. But I can't help people if I can't get over myself or my own bad attitude.

II. The Bull In a China Shop

This analogy is used to describe a person who walks into a situation and makes a mess, often without realizing it. It's a good idea to get as much information as you can about how and why you're in this place for the here and now. Because that determines so much of what goes on around you and why. I'm not saying you shouldn't be confident and proactive. But there has to be a balance.

8. For new leaders, it's important to know the difference between being invited to ride the bus vs. being invited to _____ the bus.
9. If we assume too much or too little _____, we can cause problems for ourselves and for those around us.
10. When in doubt about your role in a situation, try bouncing things off the _____ you answer to.

III. Taking The Middle Road

11. This is not a bad _____ in the early seasons in a new place or position.
12. While some may see this option as too safe or too full of compromise, this is all about finding balance:
 - a. Being helpful, but not to the _____.
 - b. Being _____, but not difficult to work with.
13. Eventually you'll see more clearly the role you're needing to play here.

14. The best approach to take would be a balance like this:

- a. Finding a way to represent the organization in a good light, yet without _____ the people it serves.
- b. It pays to be wise and look at things from a different angle sometimes, so that you can use _____ to help you in the here and now, instead of only years later in the rearview mirror.

IV. Be True To Yourself

15. Some encouraging thoughts as we wrap up this session.

- a. A new season in a new culture may be a time of being personally _____.
 - But God won't allow more than you can handle. Remember, he had a lot to do with you being in this place and during this season.
- b. Don't be afraid to swim _____ sometimes.
 - Do what you can to fit the current culture, but don't let that same culture or submission dynamics shut you down altogether.
- c. Don't be afraid to make this leadership position and season your own by being _____ while you navigate forward.
 - You may have been brought in to lead in this area based on how well you fit the stated job description, but that doesn't mean that you have to stop being yourself.
- d. We all answer to those above us and those following us when it comes to being _____ in the role we've been given.
 - But above all that we all answer to God when it comes to being faithful in being who he made us to be.

Next up: Session 11, *Seeing the Early Seasons Properly*.

Optional Discussion:

1. Do you see yourself in any of the traits just mentioned?
2. Do you see any of those traits in others around you?
3. Can you pinpoint areas where these traits have helped or hindered so far?
4. Do you see ways to find a balance in your own traits while still aiming to be yourself?

Session 11 - Seeing The Early Seasons Properly

I. Introduction

Though we've covered a lot of ground so far in this collection of workshops, let's not forget what a great thing it is to find yourself put into a leadership role. This is truly a milestone in your life, and it's something worth celebrating! Once the dust has settled and you feel comfortable with things, don't forget to get the word out to all your family, friends and associates, so that everyone knows how to now reach you in this new place. Hopefully this will be a good chance to hear some congratulations from those who only now know about your exciting updates.

[My own experience in new places.]

1. It's ok if this season looks and feels different than what you were _____.
2. It's good to not be so set on your future plans that you become _____, possibly missing some items right now that God wants you to have in your tool belt later on.
3. So, how do you know the point of this season?
 - James 1:5 offers some specific guidance again here: If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. (NIV)
4. If I want to know what this season is about for my life or my leadership, I can ask God specifically to _____ me and help me better understand things.
5. And you can do exactly the same thing. Scripture says that God is no _____ of persons.
6. My own leadership journey has had some surprises along the way, but God has always been faithful to help me understand the seasons I'm in whenever I ask for that kind of _____.
7. Another thing I've seen about my own leadership journey is that there are _____ patterns.

II. The Back Door of the Palace

In almost every leadership role I've ever had, I didn't walk in to great fanfare, celebration or red-carpet treatment. In fact, I almost always arrived on the scene through the back door of the palace, if you will. Or, as I like to call it, the servants' entrance. After awhile in a new place, it seemed to never fail that I would eventually be given more responsibility and leadership. But in the beginning I was always in a lower level of service.

8. But just like young David saw the benefit of gathering stones for his pouch, I began to see the value in taking good _____ in my early seasons in a place.
9. Sometimes these notes involved seeing _____ that could be made.
10. Sometimes these notes were about new _____ that hadn't been tried in that place before.
11. And in most cases I would go on to use those notes and ideas to make things better in my own leadership role after being promoted to a place of more _____.

You may already have an idea of where God is taking you as a leader. But you may have no way of knowing all the job descriptions, roles and experiences you'll have during your life's leadership journey. Because of this reality, I encourage you to keep an open mind to all the things God may be adding to your tool belt. Just because God allows

you to see or sense some things ahead of time, that doesn't mean there won't also be some things you didn't expect along the way.

12. Some seasons may be about learning valuable skills, while other seasons may be about growing your personal side, so that you're ready for the challenges coming later on.

13. But the main thing is to _____ God along the way.

14. After all, if you knew everything that was coming ahead of time, how important would it be to trust God in the first place?

III. Small beginnings

Sometimes a new leader will have such big dreams and so much excitement about getting into leadership that it can be disappointing when things don't start off with a bang. We all enjoy being celebrated from time to time, and that includes being celebrated in leadership. But some new leaders can become so discouraged over this area that they eventually drop out of their leadership journey. Rather than being patient and allowing God to show them more over time, they conclude that the whole thing must have been a fantasy or some kind of mistake. So then they take themselves out of the race and miss out on all those great things God had in store for them and those following their lead.

• Zechariah 4:10 says - Who [with reason] despises the day of small things? (AMP)

15. Some Bible translations call it the day of small _____.

16. If you and I don't know all the good and bad that are in the future of our leadership, then isn't it just as easy to look forward to _____ things as it is to look forward to bad things?

17. It's all about trusting God.

18. You never know the full outcome when you start your leadership _____.

I've seen the sound person become the senior pastor. I've seen the drummer become the lead singer. And I've seen the person who came in through the back door eventually get put in charge of things. Could any of those things have happened if the person had given up and walked away? I've also witnessed people stepping away from a leadership position right before an amazing thing happened in that place. But the person who walked away had already closed that door. The same enemy of your soul is also the enemy of your successful leadership, and he would love to see you throw in the towel and give up.

[Encouragement.]

19. Regardless of where you might be in all these scenarios, understand that there may be some long days we all have to _____ as leaders.

20. There will be days when it would be very easy to _____ and walk away.

21. But this may be a season in which God is wanting to help you work on some things you wouldn't think about otherwise.

22. So whether you're starting on the red carpet or starting out in the back of the building, obscured or even _____ from sight, God sees you right where you are, and he has a plan for you.
23. I encourage you to trust him to unfold that plan in his perfect _____.

Next up: Session 12, *Here To Serve*.

Optional Discussion:

1. Have you begun to understand the reasons why you're here, in this time and in this place?
2. Have aspects of small beginnings been discouraging or disheartening to you so far?
3. Have you made yourself completely available for things now and also for things God could be preparing for later?

Session 12 - Here To Serve

Serving others doesn't mean becoming their doormat. A servant leader does have authority. But it's very difficult to truly lead people if you don't serve them first.

[Finishing my doctorate.]

1. As Christians who are also leaders, we will never _____ from serving others.
2. The goal isn't to become so good at leading that I never have to deal with _____ again.
3. The goal is to become a better servant leader in every season, and that involves meeting the _____ of people.

If you begin to see this as your goal, then don't let certain times discourage you. You may not be starting out the way you thought you would, but trust God to get you there on time. In the meantime, I encourage you to keep your heart pure and your attitude right. Anyone can serve others and make them miserable in the process. But when we serve others with joy we're showing the whole world that we trust God at each step of our leadership journey.

4. And when you're placed into a situation that isn't perfect, here's a suggestion: Give it all you've got and do the best job you can while you're there. Why?
 - a. You'll impress those watching you with the fact that you're a resourceful person who can create success in _____ situations, helping your overall profile in their eyes.
 - In other words, think of this season as an audition for other opportunities that may be a better fit later on.
 - b. It's about _____.
 - When Jesus shared the parable of the talents, it was the servant who made the most of what he was given who got the most praise from his master.
5. Let's be specific here. Anyone can create success in _____ situations.
6. But it takes real _____ in your Heavenly Father to press on when things are not perfect.
7. And the great thing is that when we hang in there and let God have the last word, it's usually quite an amazing end to the story, and we get the opportunity to come along on the journey.

I. The Test of Availability

8. To be a part of something _____ than myself, I must first pass this test.
9. The world is full of people who are so focused on themselves that the idea of _____ others is often very foreign to them.
10. But God is constantly seeking those who will serve him by serving _____.
 - Remember John 21:17, in which Jesus tells Peter, "Feed my sheep."
11. I must make a decision: I can continue to focus on myself or I can pass the Test of Availability by allowing God to make _____ in my life for more of his plans.
12. By making myself _____ to God, I am proclaiming Isaiah 6:8, which says, 'Here am I, Lord. Send me.'

13. Once you've _____ to God's plan for your life, things will get interesting, and sometimes very quickly.
- Opportunities will start to come your way.
 - People will want to connect with you.
14. You may soon find yourself in a completely different _____ in life.
15. But making yourself available to serve means that now God can open all the doors that need to open.

II. Checking Your Own Motives

16. I've learned over the years that if a person is a little too ready to be a leader, then there could be _____.
17. It's possible to want to be in charge for other reasons than _____ other people.
18. If you're motivated by the perks that come with leadership, then ministry _____ may not be the best fit for you.
19. That may play well in the world of business or sports, but it doesn't always work out so well in ministry.
20. Why? Because a leader who starts out with the wrong _____ runs the risk of trampling the very people who need his or her leadership.
21. In this situation it's too easy for your leadership to be all about you and how great or smart or talented you are.
22. It's great to have all those qualities, but if they're not helping you serve the people around you then your leadership is only for your _____, and that's a sad place to be.
23. But if you're serious about being the right kind of leader, then God's way must become _____ way.
24. And again, our role model in all this is Jesus.
25. He had so much at his disposal, and yet he chose to _____ others with his leadership.

III. A Final Word

Congratulations on completing this workshop collection, *Navigating The Early Seasons!* I hope you now feel more confident in this time in your leadership. Feel free to review these sessions in the future. You may already know that every season brings new understandings and insights, so as you might expect, you'll probably see more in this collection each time you return to it.

Reminders

- Free, full podcast episodes, *The 4 Levels of Leadership*, at the iTunes store.
 - Search under Welcome To Your Leadership.
- The free worksheets for these sessions are at drtw.net/newleader.
- Find us on Facebook under Welcome To Your Leadership.

Optional Discussion:

1. Have you surrendered all areas of your leadership in order to effectively serve God?
2. Have you already identified motives or attitudes that will need God's help in order to make positive changes?
3. Wrapping up this set of workshops, do you now see some new possibilities and goals for you leadership journey?