

# Become a Talent-Plus Person

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*  
Philippians 4:13

Many leaders today place too much emphasis on talent alone. John C. Maxwell, in his book, *Talent Is Never Enough*, argues that talent alone is not the secret to success in leadership. Maxwell asks, *"If talent alone is enough, then why do you and I know so many highly talented people who are not successful?"*

When people achieve great things, others will often explain their accomplishments by simply attributing everything to talent; but talent alone is never the answer. The lessons in this notebook are not anti-talent. Talent is a wonderful God-given gift that should be celebrated, but it is not enough for long-term success. In the beginning of a task, talent will give you a head start; but the advantage talent gives lasts only a short time. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work. Some vitally important choices are required in order to convert talent into results.

Can anyone be successful? Where does talent fit in? Please consider the following statements:

1. Everyone has talent. All of us have something that we can do well.
2. Develop the talent you have, not the one you want. Focus on building your strengths.
3. Make choices that add value to talent. Destiny is not a matter of chance; it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.

In this notebook, we will examine thirteen key choices that can maximize any person's talent:

1. Belief \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
2. Passion \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
3. Initiative \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
4. Focus \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
5. Preparation \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
6. Practice \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
7. Perseverance \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
8. Courage \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
9. Teachability \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
10. Character \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
11. Relationships \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
12. Responsibility \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.
13. Teamwork \_\_\_\_\_ your talent.

If you make these choices, you can become a talent-plus person. A talent-plus person can become an outstanding leader.

**Discussion:** Take a moment to list your top three talents or strengths. What are you doing to grow those talents?

### Belief Lifts Your Talent

When people figure out their strengths, what often hinders them is not lack of talent but a lack of belief in themselves. When people believe in themselves, they unleash power in themselves that almost immediately takes them to a higher level.

Whatever your talent is, it will not be lifted to its highest level unless you also believe in yourself. You need to...

1. Believe in your \_\_\_\_\_.

To reach your potential, you must first believe in your potential and determine to live way beyond average.

2. Believe in \_\_\_\_\_.

Sooner or later, the man who wins is the man who thinks he can.

3. Believe in your \_\_\_\_\_.

Belief in your mission will...

- \_\_\_\_\_ you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ you.

Understanding the following three principles is crucial to becoming a talent-plus person:

1. Belief determines \_\_\_\_\_.

A belief is more than an idea that a person possesses; it is an idea that possesses a person. If you want to achieve significantly in life, you must believe that you can. You need to expect to succeed. That does not mean you will always succeed. Sometimes you will fail; you will make mistakes. But if you expect to win, you maximize your talent and you keep trying.

2. Expectations determine \_\_\_\_\_.

More than anything else, your expectations will determine whether or not you take bold action to reach your dreams.

3. Actions determine \_\_\_\_\_.

Many people simply hope for good results in life. Hope is not a strategy. Good results come from good actions.

**Remember:** If you want good results, you need to perform good actions. If you want to perform good actions, you must have positive expectations. To have positive expectations, you must first believe.

**Discussion:** Do you truly believe in your talents? What is one way you can more effectively use your talents to accomplish your God-given mission?

### **Biblical Case Study: Paul (Philippians 4: 4-13)**

Paul challenged the Philippian believers to rejoice because of their relationship with Jesus Christ. He encouraged them to put into practice the things he had taught them and that they had believed. He reminded them that God would be with them to empower them to do those things.

Paul could challenge the believers to put their beliefs into actions because he – even while in prison – put his beliefs into action every day. With faith in Christ and bold expectations because of the Holy Spirit living within him, Paul focused on serving God by making the preaching of the gospel his primary activity. Paul became an unstoppable leader.

Paul, the man who willingly endured incredible suffering and persecution during the course of his ministry, demonstrated belief, expectations and results. He could rightly say, *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”* (Philippians 4:13).

### **Passion Energizes Your Talent**

What makes people take risks, go the extra mile, and do whatever it takes to achieve their goals? It isn't talent. It's passion. Passion is like a fire burning within us. A passionate person never lacks energy. Passionate people refuse to quit, regardless of the circumstances, and they make the most of whatever talent they possess. They are talent-plus people and do not stop until they succeed.

Let's examine the power of passion. There really is no substitute for passion when it comes to energizing your talent. Here is what passion can do for you:

1. Passion is the first step to \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Passion increases your \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Passion produces \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Passion is the \_\_\_\_\_ for excellence.
5. Passion is the \_\_\_\_\_ to success.
6. Passion \_\_\_\_\_ others.

What is your passion in life? The answer to the following questions can help you discover your true passion:

What do you laugh about?  
 What do you cry about?  
 What do you dream about?

If you have passion, but seem to lack energy, then you need to fire up your passion by following these steps:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ your life according to your passion.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ your passion with everything you possess.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ your passion.

There are two keys to protecting your passion:

1. Avoid negative people who throw cold water on the fire of your passion. Don't listen to them when they make statements like these...
  - That is not practical.
  - We tried that once and it failed.
  - We have never done that before.
  - That idea will not work here.
  - That's not the way we do things around here.
  - It will never work.
  - Who will do all the extra work?
  - Who do you think you are?
2. Spend time with people who encourage your dreams and ignite your passion.

**Biblical Case Study: John the Baptist (Luke 3:2-22)**

The best single word to describe John the Baptist just might be "passion." He certainly needed passion to fulfill his God-given pioneer ministry. Every pioneer needs passion. Every difference-maker must have passion.

What gave John his passion?

1. He spent time \_\_\_\_\_ with God.
2. He was consumed with his \_\_\_\_\_ in life.
3. He possessed a radical \_\_\_\_\_ to make a difference.
4. He was dissatisfied with anything but \_\_\_\_\_.

## Assessment and Application

**Assessment:**

Make a list of the people in your life who try to put out the fire of your passion. How can you minimize the damage they do to you?

**Application:**

Make a list of several people, past and present, who inspire your passion. Establish specific plans to spend more time with them in the next few weeks. List three people that you need to serve by helping to light the fire of their passion.