

# **“The Five Levels of Influence”**

*from “Leadership 101” and other materials by John Maxwell*

What makes working with one person  
a successful endeavor?

**AND**

Working with another person an  
unsuccessful endeavor?

# **Influence!**

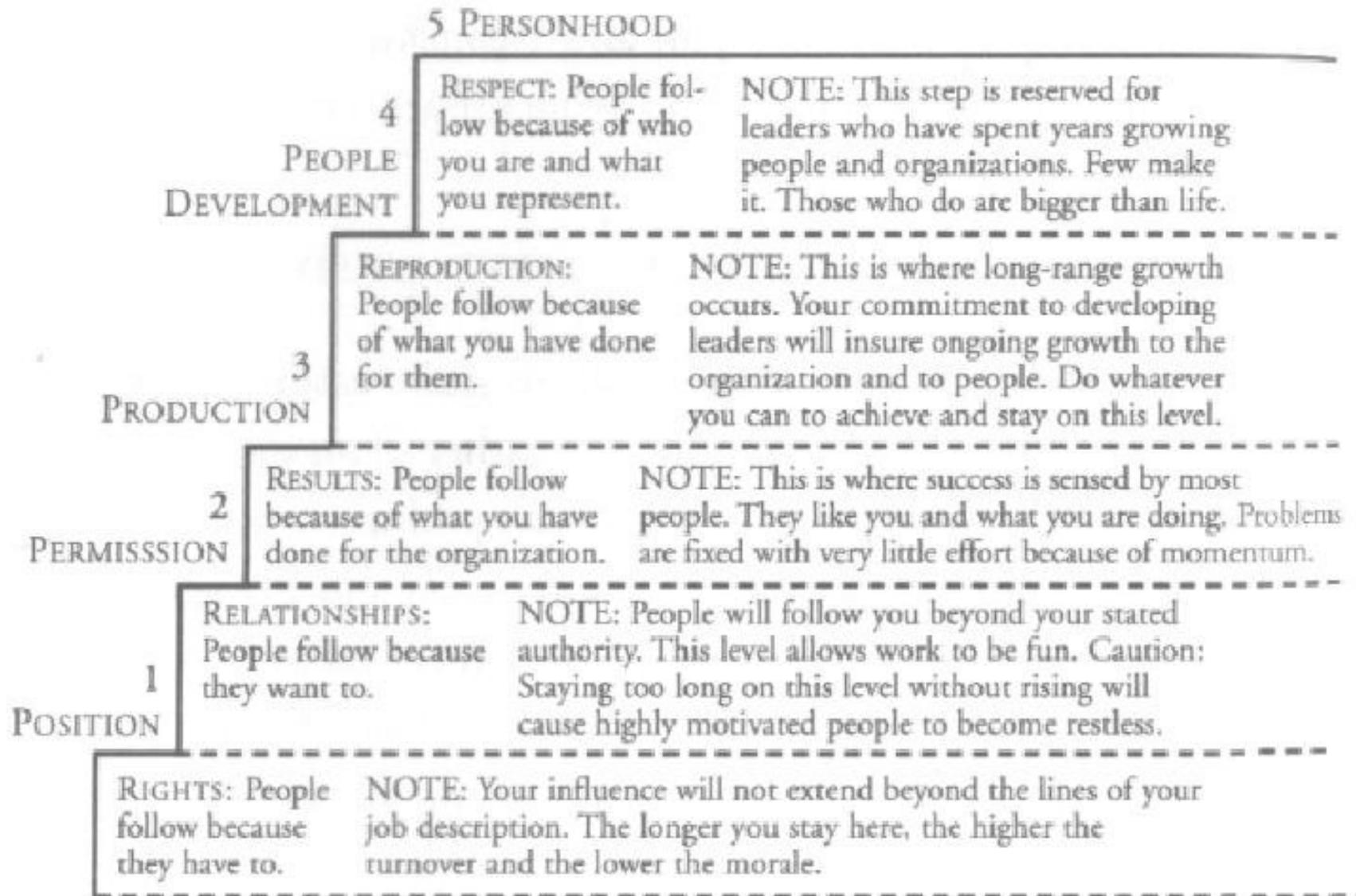
*This is the ability to have an effect on  
others*

Although a leader may be in a high-ranking position and have abundant knowledge and success, what make someone a leader is his or her **ability to influence others.**

# The Five Levels of Influence:

- A tool that demonstrates how influence works.
- Every relationship in your organization fits into one of the five levels.
- Picture them as a series of stairs, with the first step on the bottom.

# From "Leadership 101" pg. 72



## Level of Influence:

# 1. Position

- The lowest level for any leader because it is based **ONLY** on a title or job description.
- People follow you **only because they have to**. You have little influence in their lives.

1. Position. (People follow you because you have the title. You have the **Right** to lead.)

Over time, leaders who operate with this type of influence only, will find a lowering of morale on his/her team and an increase in turnover.

**Level of Influence:**

## **2. Permission**

- This level is primarily based on the relationships you have with others.
- People follow you because **they want to- they give you permission to lead.**
- But... you must climb to the next level to reap the true rewards of influence.

## 2. Permission. (People follow you because they want to. There is a **Relationship.**)

Permission given by your team is permission that can be taken away. If the team finds the leader failing to meet hopes and expectations, restlessness will ensue.

**Level of Influence:**

### **3. Production**

- Your influence is strengthened as a result of what you and your people accomplish together.
- People follow you because they have **heard what you have done for your group or the organization.**
- Although very rewarding, this level does not bring lasting success.

### 3. Production. (People follow you because of your Results)

Because people like what you have done, you are generally considered a success at this level. But production/performance is a touchy thing.

*“What have you done for me lately?”*

**Level of Influence:**

## **4. People Development**

- You develop and inspire other leaders, not just inspire followers.
- People follow you because of **what you've done for them personally.**
- There's *almost* nothing you can't accomplish at this level.

4. People Development. (People follow you because they believe you can **Reproduce** your qualities in them.)

This is the highest typical level people should expect to achieve. Do what you can to stay at this level.

## Level of Influence:

# 5. Personhood

- Leaders who have spent a lifetime pouring their lives into others sometimes find themselves on this level.
- People follow them because of **who they are and what they represent.**
- Examples: Martin Luther King, Jr., Mother Theresa, Billy Graham

5. Personhood. (People follow you because of their high level of Respect for you.)

One cannot guarantee to achieve this level. Such a leader may not be overly successful by normal standards, and may not even be alive (a martyr may fit into this category). But the person represents something that draws deep respect from others.

# An interesting way to measure

	Level (L)
Personhood	5
People Development	4
Production	3
Permission	2
Position	1

Perception				
Trust (T)	0	2	3	4
Competence (C)	0	2	3	4
Vision (V)	0	2	3	4

0	Untrustworthy, Incompetent, No vision
2	Neutral (Unproven)
3	Perceived as trustworthy, or competent or visionary
4	Proven to be trustworthy, or competent, or visionary.

$$\text{Leadership Power \%} = \left( \frac{(T \times C \times V)}{20} \right)^L$$

# Leadership Power

The leadership power is affected by the level of influence. But it also depends on the perception of trustworthiness, competence, and vision.

Of course, they are related. For example if one is judged incompetent, it is very unlikely that one would be judged to have a level 3 or higher in influence.

Still, it helps show how leadership power is affected by these factors.

# Therefore...

If perceived to have proven untrustworthy, incompetent, or lacking vision, leadership power goes to 0.

Position gives you only the product of perceived trustworthiness, competence, and vision. 0 - 3%

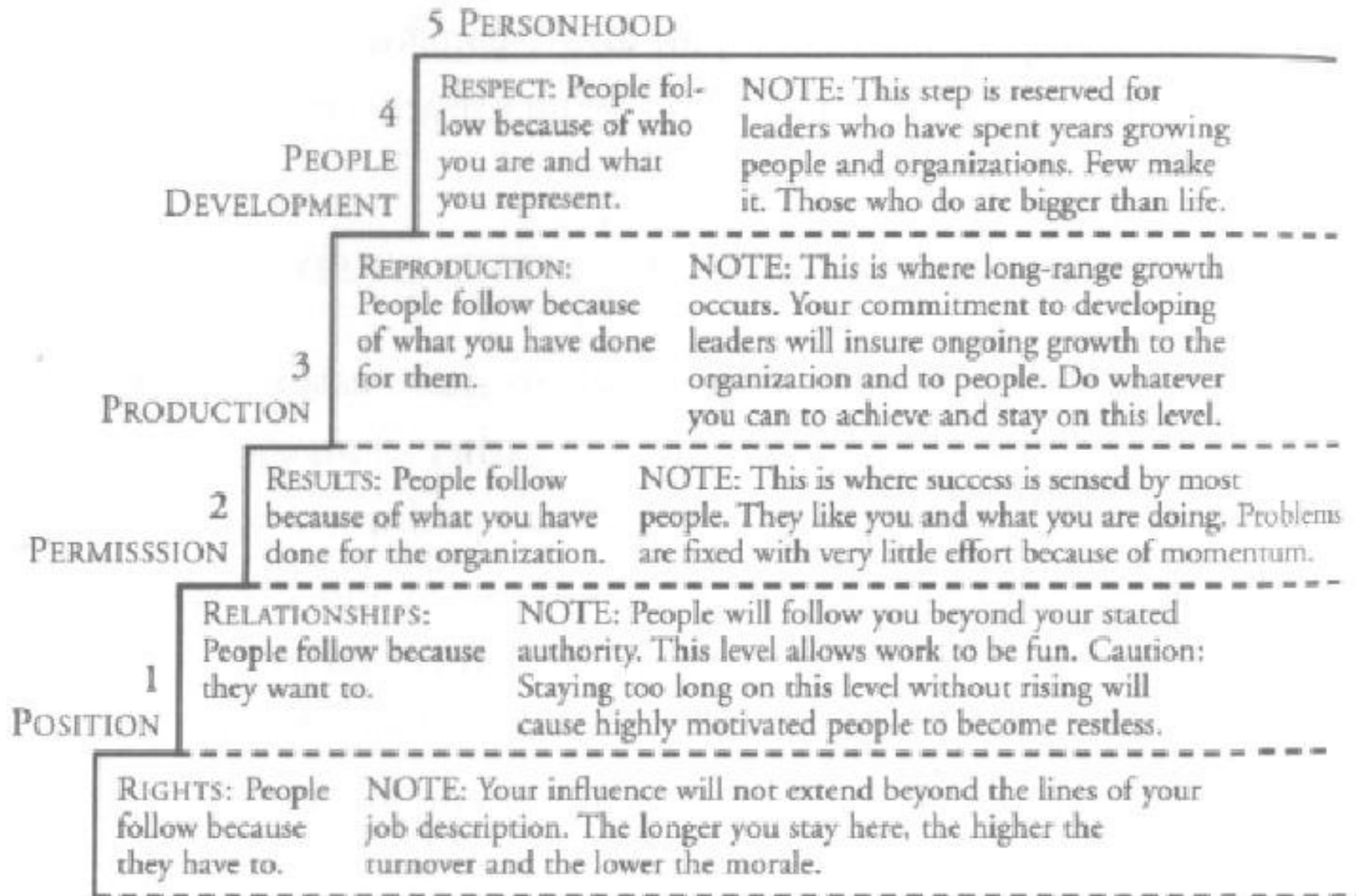
Permission gives you a possible range from 0 - 10%

Production gives you a possible range from 0 - 30%

People development gives you a possible range from 0 - 100%

Personhood gives you a possible 0 - 300%

# Influence Levels



# Final Notes

1. Some people feel that position should be enough. “The boss is the boss. What he says goes.” While many leaders say they believe this, they will rarely apply this idea for long to their own boss who shows poor qualities.

# Final Notes

2. Influence is earned. That is, it will take time. Even if a leader has a stellar track record in one organization, at a new organization, he/she will have to demonstrate vision, trustworthiness, and competence, and gradually gain influence.

# Final Notes

3. You will not be at the same level with everyone. Even the best leaders will have some people who only listen to them because they “don't want to get fired.”

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