

Are You Developing Leaders in These Key Places?

Where does leadership development happen? What environments are beneficial to leaders in their development? From a Christian perspective, leadership development is not constrained to one environment. Because the whole world is His, leadership development can happen in a plethora of places. Because He continually matures His people, God will use anything to conform us more to the image of His Son.

Here are six places leaders are developed:

1.

The Athletic Field

Several leaders I know enjoy hiring former athletes because they are used to corrective feedback, the discipline of practice, and playing on a team. For many years, high school athletes were encouraged to focus on one sport, but coaches like Urban Meyer, head coach of the Ohio State Buckeyes, prefer to recruit athletes who play multiple sports. They like how the additional sports develop the athlete. Not only are multiple skills developed, but players also learn how to take on new challenges, to work with new teammates, and to fight through the difficulties that come from playing more than one sport.

2.

The Library

John Maxwell coined the phrase “leaders are readers,” and he is right. Reading widely can help leaders grow mentally through exposure to new disciplines and new ideas. Mentally stretching to understand a new discipline can help a leader find new solutions to existing problems. If the last book you read was one on a syllabus, you are not taking your development seriously.

3.

The Classroom

The relationship with professors, the community with other students, and the focused time committed to learn are the reason many leaders go back to school for advanced degrees and executive education. Much more important than the certificate or diploma is the learning that comes from a disciplined and systematic approach to development.

4.

The Job

Experience develops you more than any classroom or book can. The job is where you test the learning from the books and classrooms. The job is where you learn what needs to improve.

5.

The Home

Marriage is sanctifying. Parenting is sanctifying. Siblings are sanctifying. Roommates are sanctifying. The home can help develop leaders relationally. The home can help leaders grow in love, forgiveness, service, and placing the needs of others ahead of their own.

6.

The Church

Long before Robert Greenleaf's seminal work *Servant Leadership*, which challenged leaders to view themselves as servants, the Church taught believers to serve others because our Savior-King has served us. Long before Jim Collins, in *Good to Great*, identified "level five leaders" as leaders who are filled with humility, the Church challenged believers to humbly view others as better than themselves. Long before Daniel Goleman, in *Primal Leadership*, identified emotionally intelligent leaders as ones filled with joy, peace, patience, and compassion, the apostle Paul challenged the Church to walk in the Spirit and display the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

The Church excels at developing leaders because the Church lifts up Jesus—the One who gave Himself for our sin, the One who transforms our character, the One who empowers us to serve others. Much of what is called "leadership" eventually won't matter. In the end, everything done apart from Him will be worth absolutely nothing. The Church helps leaders remain in Him, keep an eternal vantage point, and offer themselves to what really matters.

> [Read more from Eric.](#)

[Connect with an Auxano Navigator to learn more about developing leaders.](#)