

HOW TO LEAD WHEN YOU'RE NOT IN CHARGE

LEVERAGING INFLUENCE WHEN YOU LACK AUTHORITY

It's challenging to believe that you can lead when you haven't been given a specific title that you believe carries the authority to lead. But the truth is, being a leader is more than a title. A key to great leadership is learning to share vision and leverage influence no matter what position you're in.

That's what Clay Scroggins teaches in his book, *How to Lead When You're Not in Charge*. The identity, behaviors, and abilities that you cultivate all play a part in becoming a great leader—even if you're not in charge.

1 | DEVELOP INFLUENCE AND AUTHORITY

Many of us go through our lives waiting to be put in charge in order to lead. We see authority and power only in certain positions. We break that habit of thinking by realizing these limitations don't actually exist.

"Influence has always been, and will always be, the currency of leadership."
— Clay Scroggins

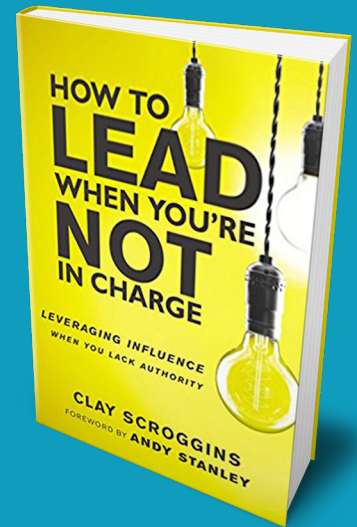
Once you begin to accept the truth that you can lead with little to no authority, you'll begin to see opportunities to do so everywhere. There's a place for authority—receiving and respecting it—but we all have abilities and opportunities that allow us to influence others, inspire change, and grow into strong leaders. It takes self-awareness and a willingness to keep our eyes open for the chance to influence the teams we work with by offering a vision that comes directly from our unique perspective.

The more you understand yourself, the more you'll understand the type of influence you have. Your personality, purpose, and priorities are just a few factors that affect how you lead and influence. Who are you? What are your strengths? Why are you here? Who does God say you are?

Clay Scroggins encourages recognizing true identity and embracing ambition that glorifies God. A truly great leader doesn't grasp authority for their own selfish ends but instead leads under God's authority for God's glory.



BOOK BREAKDOWN



MINISTRY INSIGHTS

First and foremost, our example of godly leadership is Jesus and what a wonderful example He is. In *How to Lead When You're Not in Charge*, we're reminded of Jesus' vision for leadership, that "the best leaders, the ones who align with His vision for leadership, will lead as servants who are aware of their responsibility and who answer to a higher calling."

He is also our source of identity. As ministry leaders, it's critical that the identity we lead out of is the one that God has given us.

How we see our identity as a Christ follower impacts the way we steward our influence even when we don't have authority and our authority when it's trusted to us. We don't kill our ambition, but we reign it in and bring it under God's authority. We re-define ambition, honor those who have authority over us, and challenge in order to bring about positive change—all to the glory of God.

Leading in love and influencing others for the betterment of the Kingdom of God doesn't require a certain title. It's about responsible stewardship over that influence, no matter what our title is. Jesus has more authority and power than any Lead Pastor or CEO and still demonstrated that leading well is loving and serving.

2 | BEHAVING LIKE A LEADER

In *How to Lead When You're Not in Charge*, four behaviors that are needed to lead well are identified: leading yourself, choosing positivity, thinking critically, and rejecting passivity.

All four can be briefly described as behaviors that everyone needs to recognize, cultivate, and contribute to their team in order to be a great leader. They're not limited qualifications for only the Lead Pastor or CEO.

Great, godly leaders—regardless of their level of authority—first take responsibility for **leading themselves well**, which includes responsibility for their attitude, development, and growth. They also choose to **bring positivity** to their team in what Clay Scroggins refers to as a “positive, can-do, forward-thinking, hope-filled attitude.” These leaders are **critical thinkers** who intentionally seek out improvements and tend to “notice things, question things, and connect things.” Lastly, leaders **reject passivity** that often comes from feeling that you don't have control and instead embrace what they can control—how they leverage their influence and how they respond to challenges.

3 | CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

Do you freeze at the idea of challenging your boss? The concept of “challenging up” is to inspire change by challenging your boss in an honoring, effective way. The purpose of the challenge is to question the status quo in order to prepare for a greater future and make the organization better overall.

Changes are challenging, which is why challenges to change are sometimes resisted or perceived as undue criticism. But “great leaders don't get defensive,” says Clay, and knowing that challenging up could be difficult doesn't negate a leader's responsibility to do it when necessary. How and why we do it matters but challenging up is a risk worth taking.

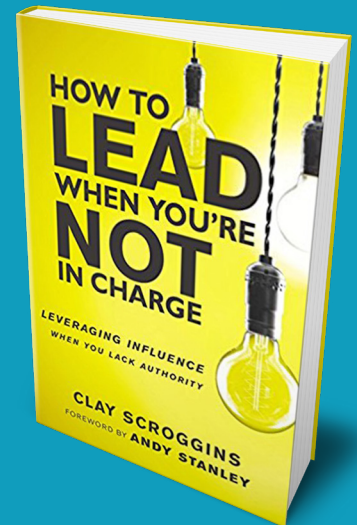
“Victory is not just the change that takes place because you challenge up and lead when you aren't the one in charge. The victory is also the growth that takes place when you enter into this learning process as a leader.”

– Clay Scroggins

Evaluate the relationship you have with your boss and the meaning of the challenge you intend to bring. Consider your approach and adjust it as necessary to fit the situation and the person. And before challenging, remember these four principles from *How to Lead When You're Not in Charge*:

1. Be convinced that God put your boss in their position.
2. To build trust, practice faithfulness.
3. Bring up disagreements when emotions are low.
4. Champion publicly. Challenge privately.

BOOK BREAKDOWN



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. As an individual, how do your personality and strengths affect the type of influence you have on our team?
2. Who is someone that had influence in your life even though he or she didn't have authority over you? What was it about that person that made him or her influential?
3. How have any or all of the four behaviors been challenging for you (leading yourself well, bringing positivity, critical thinking, and rejecting passivity)? How can you improve in these behaviors?
4. What are some ways your behavior might change if you stopped thinking like an employee and started thinking like an owner? Do you think those changes would be worth the effort? Why or why not?
5. To what degree is the idea of “challenging up” new to you? Do you find it comforting, uncomfortable, or both? Why?
6. Instead of waiting, what can you choose to pick up right now? How can you make a plan to deal with it? What steps can you take to ensure your plan responds to your church's mission and goals?