

# LEADERSHIP CAPACITY – INTELLIGENCE

## A T R U S T W O R T H Y S A Y I N G

NO. 2

The old coach used to say, “You can’t coach speed!” and he was pretty much right. Either you have it or you don’t. But you can always get faster and make sure you are running in the right direction. Capacity is about what you have, but capacity can be overrated. More importantly, effectiveness is about what you do with what you have.

Capacity is best understood as ‘the size of our bucket.’ But it is also about how willing we are to fill our bucket to the brim. Leadership capacity is enlarged or restricted both by the size and content of several buckets: personality, energy, emotional stability and social styles are just a few of the big ones. No bucket may be more crucial than that of intelligence.

We all have varying degrees of intelligence. Some are born with big buckets and others have a fairly small tea cup. Everyone has his or her unique capacity, but we are all challenged to make the most of what we have. There is not much we can do about our IQ; it seems to be set for life. But we can work on our knowledge base and expand our awareness and understanding. We have to ask ourselves two questions: How big is my bucket? And how full is it?

Howard Hendricks once said, “Leaders are readers and readers are leaders.” I don’t know if it was original with him or not but it is true. Leaders strive to expand their base of knowledge. They thrive on a continuous stream of fresh ideas filling their buckets, whatever the size. Books, seminars, sermons, podcasts, journals and conversations with interesting people keep the faucet turned on with fresh, stimulating thoughts and ideas.

Leaders tend to be complex people who deal with issues from multiple disciplines. Leaders read widely and deeply to gain insights in many arenas of life. The cross-pollination of ideas between diverse subjects generates creative ideas for opportunity and growth. Stay curious, keep exploring and learn as much as you can. Think critically. Don’t accept everything you hear or read but push back with personal conviction and from an ever-growing base of knowledge.

Wisdom emerges as we apply our acquired information to the challenges of life. Being finite creatures we all get stumped along the way. James 1:5 reminds us of the ultimate source of wisdom: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”

Encourage the next generation of leaders to accept the challenge of continuous, life-long learning. Look for those who have the gift of a big bucket and help them fill it with the best quality information that you can find.

Here are twenty-five books I've enjoyed, argued with and benefited from over the years. They come from five areas of interest to me:

### Recreational Reading

Into Thin Air by John Krakauer  
A River Runs Through It by Norman Maclean  
Cod by Mark Kurlansky  
Chronicles of Narnia by C. S. Lewis  
Poetry of Robert Frost by Robert Frost

### Christian Life

Prodigal God by Tim Keller  
Silence by Saki Endo  
The Divine Conspiracy by Dallas Willard  
Free of Charge by Miroslav Volf  
The Jesus I Never Knew by Phillip Yancey

### Leadership/Management/Society

Primal Leadership by Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee  
Leading Change by John Kotter  
Applebee's America by Fournier, Sosnik and Dowd  
Managing the Non-Profit Organization by Peter Drucker  
Leadership by James MacGregor Burns

### History

Cranmer by Diarmaid MacCulloch  
Mayflower by Nathaniel Philbrick  
Undaunted Courage by Stephen Ambrose  
Endurance by Alfred Lansing  
How the Irish Saved Civilization by Thomas Cahill

### Relationships

The Blessing by John Trent & Gary Smalley  
Grace Based Parenting by Tim Kimmel  
Dancing with Porcupines by Bob Phillips  
True Faced by Thrall, McNicol and Lynch  
Community and Growth by Jean Vanier

*This lesson, written by Dan Bolin, is a part of a larger series on leadership called "A Trustworthy Saying." Find more teaching/lessons available for download for free at: [www.refuelinginflight.com/trustworthysaying](http://www.refuelinginflight.com/trustworthysaying)*