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FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP

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FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP

Servant-Leadership for the Twenty-First Century

Edited by

Larry C. Spears and Michele Lawrence



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FOREWORD

THE HEART OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

Ken Blanchard

I AM EXCITED ABOUT this book! Why? Because I am a fan of Robert Greenleaf and think that servant-leadership is the foundation for effective leadership.

I had the pleasure of meeting Robert Greenleaf in the late 1960s, when I was at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. I was attracted to the school because Vernon Alden had come, as president of the university, with the vision of creating the “Harvard of the Midwest.” He had recruited all kinds of exciting people and resources to make this vision a reality.

I went to Ohio University in 1966 as an administrative assistant to the dean of the School of Business Administration, to help develop a graduate program in administration. In this role, I participated in the activities of the Ohio Fellows Group—a special undergraduate leadership program designed by Les Rollins, a longtime friend of Robert Greenleaf. Alden and Rollins were two of the first board members for The Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership (then called The Center for Applied Ethics).

When Greenleaf spent a weekend with the students, I was enthralled with his thinking. In fact, when I got a chance to teach, I tried to put his servant-leadership concepts into practice. At that time, I began my practice of always giving the students the final exam during the first day of class. When I started doing that, other faculty members would ask, “What are you doing?”

I would say, “I’m confused.”

They’d say, “You act it.”

Troubled, I would respond, “I thought we were supposed to teach these young people.”

“You are,” they would be quick to reply. “But don’t give them the final exam ahead of time.”

My servant-leadership response was: “Not only am I going to give them the final exam during the first day of class, but what do you think I’m going to do all semester? I’m going to teach them the answers! You better believe it, so when they get to the final exam, they’ll get A’s!” To me, life is all about getting A’s, not about following the normal grade distribution curve.

During this period, Paul Hersey had come to Ohio University as chairman of the Management Department. In 1967, we started to write our textbook, *Management of Organizational Behavior* (now in its eighth edition), and to work on the development of Situational Leadership®. I knew Situational Leadership was a servant-leadership model, but the concepts I had learned from Greenleaf did not return to center stage in my work until the mid-1990s, when I began studying Jesus of Nazareth as a clear example of enlightened leadership. During this period, I was writing *Leadership by the Book*, with Bill Hybels, Senior Pastor of Willow Creek Community Church, and Phil Hodges, a longtime colleague.

I was first motivated to study Jesus as a leader when I was interviewed by Robert Schuller on *The Hour of Power* in 1983, as part of the publicity for *The One Minute Manager*®. In my interview, Reverend Schuller suggested that Jesus was a classic One Minute Manager: Once he had made his goals clear, he visited village after village, identifying people who were doing things right, and then praising or healing those gathered around him. If people were off base, he would reprimand them or redirect them.

My response was, “Interesting!” Those behaviors certainly exemplified the three secrets of the One Minute Manager: One Minute Goal Setting, One Minute Praisings, and One Minute Reprimands.

After that exchange on *The Hour of Power*, my spiritual journey began to intensify. When I started to read the Bible, I began

to realize that everything I'd ever taught about leadership over the years, Jesus had already modeled. Jesus is not the only spiritual model, but his leadership style is often regarded as one of the most influential and effective the world has ever known. And he did it with twelve inexperienced people! The only person who had much education was Judas, who turned out to be his only turnover problem. Yet, with this ragtag group, Jesus was able to create a lasting impact. And central to Jesus' philosophy was servant-leadership. I believe Jesus exemplified the fully committed and effective servant-leader. He sent a clear message on the primary importance of servant-leadership when James and John seemed to be vying for a special leadership role among the disciples:

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lorded over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant. (*Matthew 20:25–27*)

The key phrase here is “Not so with you.” Jesus was talking about a form of leadership very different from the model familiar to the disciples: a leader who is primarily a servant. He did not offer them a Plan B. Servant-leadership was to be their mode of operation. And so it should be for all leaders.

With that new insight, servant-leadership and what I had learned from Robert Greenleaf came center stage in my work again. I truly believe that servant-leadership has never been more applicable to the world of leadership than it is today. Not only are people looking for a deeper purpose and meaning when they must meet the challenges of today's changing world; they are also looking for principles and philosophies that actually work. *Servant-leadership works*. Servant-leadership is about getting people to a higher level by leading people at a higher level.

Absorb the teachings from this book's wonderful authors. Unless we begin to lead at a higher level, our future is in danger. Servant-leadership can make a difference in our life and in the lives of those we touch. But it takes heart. My hat is off to Robert Greenleaf, and to the efforts of Larry Spears, Michele Lawrence, and all the good

folks at The Greenleaf Center, for keeping Greenleaf's work alive and for leading the servant-leadership charge.

KEN BLANCHARD

Dr. Ken Blanchard, cofounder and chief spiritual officer of The Ken Blanchard Companies, a full-service human resource development group, is characterized by friends, colleagues, and clients as one of the most insightful and compassionate men in business today. Few people have impacted the day-to-day management of people and companies more than Ken Blanchard. He is a prominent and sought-after author, speaker, and business consultant. His impact as a writer is far-reaching. His best-selling book, *The One Minute Manager*, coauthored with Spencer Johnson, has sold more than 10 million copies worldwide, has been translated into more than 25 languages, and is still on best-seller lists. He has established The Center for FaithWalk Leadership to help leaders of faith walk their faith in the marketplace and follow the servant-leadership model of Jesus of Nazareth.

PREFACE

FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP: Servant-Leadership for the Twenty-First Century owes much to the favorable public response to two earlier books in this series: *Reflections on Leadership: How Robert K. Greenleaf's Theory of Servant-Leadership Influenced Today's Top Management Thinkers* (John Wiley & Sons, 1995), and *Insights on Leadership: Service, Stewardship, Spirit and Servant-Leadership* (John Wiley & Sons, 1998). Both books have gone into multiple printings and have piqued the interest of tens of thousands of readers who are now exploring and implementing servant-leadership. *The Power of Servant-Leadership*, also published in 1998, offered readers a complementary sourcebook for how servant-leadership can be applied to personal and business endeavors.

Since the publication of the two servant-leadership anthologies, many new articles and essays have been written about servant-leadership. This volume brings together some of the most current and significant pieces on servant-leadership and on the growing influence of Robert K. Greenleaf's writings. Among them are several essays, written especially for this comprehensive collection, by some of today's leading thinkers, writers, and practitioners.

If you are intrigued, inspired, or moved by what you discover herein and wish to have more information concerning the

wide array of servant-leadership programs and resources, contact us at:

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LARRY C. SPEARS
MICHELE LAWRENCE

FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP

INTRODUCTION

TRACING THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

Larry C. Spears

The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test is: Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?

Robert K. Greenleaf

THE MIGHTIEST OF RIVERS are first fed by many small trickles of water. This observation is also an apt way of conveying my belief that the growing number of practitioners of servant-leadership has increased from a trickle to a river. On a global scale, it is not yet a mighty river. However, it is an expanding river that has a deep current.

The servant-leader concept continues to grow in its influence and impact. In fact, we have witnessed an unparalleled explosion of interest in and practice of servant-leadership during the past decade. In many ways, it can truly be said that the times are only now beginning to catch up with Robert Greenleaf's visionary call to servant-leadership.

Servant-leadership, now in its fourth decade as a specific leadership and service concept, continues to create a quiet revolution in workplaces around the world. This book and this introduction are

intended to provide a broad overview of the growing influence this unique concept of servant-leadership is having on people and their workplaces.

In these early years of the twenty-first century, we are beginning to see that traditional, autocratic, and hierarchical modes of leadership are yielding to a newer model—one based on teamwork and community, one that seeks to involve others in decision making, one strongly based in ethical and caring behavior, and one that is attempting to enhance the personal growth of workers while improving the caring and quality of our many institutions. This emerging approach to leadership and service is called *servant-leadership*.

The words *servant* and *leader* are usually thought of as being opposites. When two opposites are brought together in a creative and meaningful way, a paradox emerges. And so the words *servant* and *leader* have been brought together to create the paradoxical idea of servant-leadership. The basic idea of servant-leadership is both logical and intuitive. Since the time of the industrial revolution, managers have tended to view people as objects; institutions have considered workers as cogs within a machine. In the past few decades, we have witnessed a shift in that long-held view. Standard practices are rapidly shifting toward the ideas put forward by Robert Greenleaf, Stephen Covey, Peter Senge, Max DePree, Margaret Wheatley, Ken Blanchard, and many others who suggest that there is a better way to manage our organizations in the twenty-first century.

Today, there is a growing recognition of the need for a more team-oriented approach to leadership and management. Robert Greenleaf's writings on the subject of servant-leadership helped to get this movement started, and his views have had a profound and growing effect.

ROBERT K. GREENLEAF

Despite all the buzz about modern leadership techniques, no one knows better than Greenleaf what really matters.

—*Working Woman* magazine

The term *servant-leadership* was first coined in a 1970 essay entitled *The Servant as Leader*, by Robert K. Greenleaf (1904–1990). Greenleaf, born in Terre Haute, Indiana, spent most of his organizational life in the field of management research, development, and education at AT&T. Following a 40-year career at AT&T, Greenleaf enjoyed a second career that lasted 25 years: he served as an influential consultant to a number of major institutions, including Ohio University, MIT, Ford Foundation, R. K. Mellon Foundation, the Mead Corporation, the American Foundation for Management Research, and Lilly Endowment Inc. In 1964, Greenleaf founded the Center for Applied Ethics, which was renamed the Robert K. Greenleaf Center in 1985 and is now headquartered in Indianapolis.

As a lifelong student of how things get done in organizations, Greenleaf distilled his observations in a series of essays and books on the theme of “The Servant as Leader”—the objective of which was to stimulate thought and action for building a better, more caring society.

The Servant-as-Leader Idea

The idea of the servant as leader came partly out of Greenleaf’s half-century of experience in working to shape large institutions. However, the event that crystallized Greenleaf’s thinking came in the 1960s, when he read Hermann Hesse’s short novel *Journey to the East*—an account of a mythical journey by a group of people on a spiritual quest.

After reading this book, Greenleaf concluded that its central meaning was that a great leader is first experienced as a servant to others, and this simple fact is central to his or her greatness. True leadership emerges from those whose primary motivation is a deep desire to help others.

In 1970, at the age of 66, Greenleaf published *The Servant as Leader*, the first of a dozen publications on servant-leadership. Since then, more than 500,000 copies of his books and essays have been sold worldwide. Slowly but surely, Greenleaf’s servant-leadership writings have made a deep and lasting impression on leaders,

educators, and many others who are concerned with issues of leadership, management, service, and personal growth.

What Is Servant-Leadership?

In all of his published works, Greenleaf discusses the need for a new kind of leadership model, a model that identifies serving others—including employees, customers, and community—as the number-one priority. Servant-leadership emphasizes increased service to others, a holistic approach to work, building a sense of community, and the sharing of power in decision making.

Who *is* a servant-leader? Greenleaf said that the servant-leader is one who is a servant first. In *The Servant as Leader* he wrote, “It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant—first to make sure that other people’s highest-priority needs are being served. The best test is: Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?”

It is important to stress that servant-leadership is *not* a “quick-fix” approach. Nor is it something that can be quickly instilled within an institution. At its core, servant-leadership is a long-term, transformational approach to life and work—in essence, a way of being—that has the potential for creating positive change throughout our society.

Ten Characteristics of the Servant-Leader

Servant leadership deals with the reality of power in everyday life—its legitimacy, the ethical restraints upon it and the beneficial results that can be attained through the appropriate use of power.

—*The New York Times*

After some years of carefully considering Greenleaf’s original writings, I have identified a set of 10 characteristics of the servant-leader

that I view as being of critical importance. These characteristics are central to the development of servant-leaders:

1. *Listening*. Leaders have traditionally been valued for their communication and decision-making skills. These are also important skills for the servant-leader, but they need to be reinforced by a deep commitment to listening intently to others. The servant-leader seeks to identify the will of a group and to help clarify that will. He or she seeks to listen receptively to what is being said (and not said!). Listening also encompasses getting in touch with one's own inner voice and seeking to understand what one's body, spirit, and mind are communicating. Listening, coupled with regular periods of reflection, is essential to the growth of the servant-leader.
2. *Empathy*. The servant-leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits. One assumes the good intentions of coworkers and does not reject them as people, even while refusing to accept their behavior or performance. The most successful servant-leaders are those who have become skilled empathetic listeners.
3. *Healing*. Learning to heal is a powerful force for transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of servant-leadership is its potential for healing oneself and others. Many people have broken spirits and have suffered from a variety of emotional hurts. Although this is a part of being human, servant-leaders recognize that they have an opportunity to "help make whole" those with whom they come in contact. In *The Servant as Leader*, Greenleaf writes: "There is something subtle communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share."

4. *Awareness.* General awareness, especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader. Making a commitment to foster awareness can be scary—you never know what you may discover! Awareness also aids one in understanding issues that involve ethics and values. It lends itself to being able to view most situations from a more integrated, holistic position. As Greenleaf observed: “Awareness is not a giver of solace—it is just the opposite. It is a disturber and an awakener. Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace. They have their own inner serenity.”
5. *Persuasion.* Another characteristic of servant-leaders is a reliance on persuasion, rather than on one’s positional authority, in making decisions within an organization. The servant-leader seeks to convince others, rather than to coerce compliance. This element offers one of the clearest distinctions between the traditional authoritarian model and that of servant-leadership. The servant-leader is effective at building consensus within groups. This emphasis on persuasion over coercion probably has its roots within the beliefs of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the denomination with which Robert Greenleaf himself was most closely allied.
6. *Conceptualization.* Servant-leaders seek to nurture their abilities to “dream great dreams.” The ability to look at a problem (or an organization) from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities. For many managers, this is a characteristic that requires discipline and practice. The traditional manager is focused on the need to achieve short-term operational goals. The manager who wishes to also be a servant-leader must stretch his or her thinking to encompass broader-based conceptual thinking. Within organizations, conceptualization is also the proper role of boards of trustees or directors. Unfortunately, boards can sometimes

become involved in the day-to-day operations (something that should always be discouraged) and fail to provide the visionary concept for an institution. Trustees need to be mostly conceptual in their orientation, staffs need to be mostly operational in their perspective, and the most effective CEOs and leaders probably need to develop both perspectives. Servant-leaders are called to seek a healthy balance between conceptual thinking and a day-to-day focused approach.

7. *Foresight*. Closely related to conceptualization, the ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation is hard to define but easy to identify. One knows it when one sees it. Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant-leader to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision for the future. It is also deeply rooted within the intuitive mind. As such, one can conjecture that foresight is the one servant-leader characteristic with which one may be born. All other characteristics can be consciously developed. There hasn't been a great deal written about foresight. It remains a largely unexplored area in leadership studies, but one most deserving of careful attention.
8. *Stewardship*. Peter Block (author of *Stewardship and The Empowered Manager*) has defined stewardship as "holding something in trust for another." Robert Greenleaf's view of all institutions was one in which CEOs, staffs, and trustees all played significant roles in holding their institutions in trust for the greater good of society. Servant-leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others. It also emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion rather than control.
9. *Commitment to the growth of people*. Servant-leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their

tangible contributions as workers. As such, the servant-leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within his or her institution. The servant-leader recognizes the tremendous responsibility to do everything within his or her power to nurture the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of employees. In practice, this can include (but is not limited to) concrete actions such as making available funds for personal and professional development; taking a personal interest in the ideas of and the suggestions from everyone; encouraging workers' involvement in decision making; and actively assisting laid-off workers to find other employment.

10. *Building community.* The servant-leader senses that much has been lost in recent human history as a result of a shift in which large institutions, rather than local communities, have become the primary shapers of human lives. This awareness causes the servant-leader to seek to identify some means for building community among those who work within a given institution. Servant-leadership suggests that true community can be created among those who work in businesses and other institutions. Greenleaf said: "All that is needed to rebuild community as a viable life form for large numbers of people is for enough servant-leaders to show the way, not by mass movements, but by each servant-leader demonstrating his own unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group."

These 10 characteristics of servant-leadership are by no means exhaustive. However, I believe that the list serves to communicate the power and promise that this concept offers to those who are open to its invitation and challenge.

Tracing the Growing Impact of Servant-Leadership

Servant-leadership has emerged as one of the dominant philosophies being discussed in the world today.

—*Indianapolis Business Journal*

Servant-Leadership as an Institutional Model

Servant-leadership principles are being applied in significant ways in a half-dozen major areas. The first area has to do with servant-leadership as an institutional philosophy and model. Servant-leadership crosses all boundaries and is being applied by a wide variety of people working with for-profit businesses; not-for-profit corporations; and churches, universities, health care, and foundations.

In recent years, a number of institutions have jettisoned their hierarchical decision making and replaced it with a servant-leader approach. Servant-leadership advocates a group-oriented approach to analysis and decision making as a means of strengthening institutions and improving society. It also emphasizes that the power of persuasion and of seeking consensus is superior to the old top-down form of leadership. Some people have likened this to turning the hierarchical pyramid upside down. Servant-leadership holds that the primary purpose of a business should be to create a positive impact on its employees and community. Profit should not be the sole motive.

Many individuals within institutions have adopted servant-leadership as a guiding philosophy. An increasing number of companies have adopted servant-leadership as part of their corporate philosophy or as a foundation for their mission statement. Among these are The Toro Company (Minneapolis, Minnesota), Synovus Financial Corporation (Columbus, Georgia), ServiceMaster Company (Downers Grove, Illinois), The Men's Wearhouse (Fremont, California), Southwest Airlines (Dallas, Texas), and TDIndustries (Dallas, Texas).

TDIndustries (TD), one of the earliest practitioners of servant-leadership in the corporate setting, is a Dallas-based heating and plumbing contracting firm that has consistently ranked in the top 10 of *Fortune* magazine's *100 Best Companies to Work For in America*. TD's founder, Jack Lowe Sr., came upon *The Servant as Leader* essay in the early 1970s and began to distribute copies of it to his employees. They were invited to read through the essay and then to gather in small groups to discuss its meaning. The belief that managers should serve their employees became an important value for TDIndustries.

Thirty years later, Jack Lowe Jr. and his colleagues, continue to use servant-leadership as the guiding philosophy for TD. Even today, any TD Partner who supervises at least one person must go through training in servant-leadership. All new employees receive a copy of *The Servant as Leader* essay; and TD has developed elaborate training modules designed to encourage the understanding and practice of servant-leadership.

Some businesses have begun to view servant-leadership as an important framework that is helpful (and necessary) for ensuring the long-term effects of related management and leadership approaches, such as continuous quality improvement and systems thinking. It is suggested that institutions interested in creating meaningful change may be best served by starting with servant-leadership as the foundational understanding and then building on it through any number of related approaches.

Servant-leadership has influenced many noted writers, thinkers, and leaders. Max DePree, former chairman of the Herman Miller Company and author of *Leadership Is an Art* and *Leadership Jazz* has said: “The servanthood of leadership needs to be felt, understood, believed, and practiced.” And Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline*, has said that he tells people “not to bother reading any other book about leadership until you first read Robert Greenleaf’s book, *Servant-Leadership*. I believe it is the most singular and useful statement on leadership I’ve come across.” In recent years, a growing number of leaders and readers have “rediscovered” Robert Greenleaf’s own writings through books by DePree, Senge, Covey, Wheatley, Autry, and many other popular writers.

Education and Training of Not-for-Profit Trustees

A second major application of servant-leadership is its pivotal role as the theoretical and ethical basis for “trustee education.” Greenleaf wrote extensively on servant-leadership as it applies to the roles of boards of directors and trustees within institutions. His essays on these applications are widely distributed among directors of for-profit and nonprofit organizations. In his essay *Trustees as Servants*, Greenleaf urged trustees to ask themselves two central questions:

1. Whom do you serve?
2. For what purpose?

Servant-leadership suggests that boards of trustees need to undergo a radical shift in how they approach their roles. Trustees who seek to act as servant-leaders can help to create institutions of great depth and quality. Over the past decade, two of America's largest grant-making foundations (Lilly Endowment Inc. and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation) have encouraged the development of programs designed to educate and train not-for-profit boards of trustees to function as servant-leaders. John Carver, the noted author on board governance, addresses this particular application in Chapter 14 of this book.

Community Leadership Programs

The third application of servant-leadership concerns its deepening role in community leadership organizations across the country. A growing number of community leadership groups are using Greenleaf Center resources as part of their own education and training efforts. Some have been doing so for more than 20 years.

M. Scott Peck, who has written about the importance of building true community, says the following in *A World Waiting to Be Born*: “In his work on servant-leadership, Greenleaf posited that the world will be saved if it can develop just three truly well-managed, large institutions—one in the private sector, one in the public sector, and one in the nonprofit sector. He believed—and I know—that such excellence in management will be achieved through an organizational culture of civility routinely utilizing the mode of community.”

Service-Learning Programs

The fourth application involves servant-leadership and experiential education. During the past 25 years, experiential education programs of all sorts have sprung up in virtually every college and university—and, increasingly, in secondary schools, too. Experiential

education, or “learning by doing,” is now a part of most students’ educational experience.

Around 1980, a number of educators began to write about the linkage between the servant-leader concept and experiential learning under a new term called “service-learning.” Service-learning has become a major focus for experiential education programs in the past few years.

The National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) has adopted service-learning as one of its major program areas. NSEE has published a massive three-volume work called *Combining Service and Learning*, which brings together many articles and papers about service-learning—several dozen of which discuss servant-leadership as the philosophical basis for experiential learning programs.

Leadership Education

The fifth application of servant-leadership concerns its use in both formal and informal education and training programs. This is taking place through leadership and management courses in colleges and universities, as well as through corporate training programs. A number of undergraduate and graduate courses on management and leadership incorporate servant-leadership within their course curricula. Several colleges and universities now offer specific courses on servant-leadership. Also, a number of noted leadership authors, including Peter Block, Ken Blanchard, Max DePree, and Peter Senge, have acclaimed the servant-leader concept as an overarching framework that is compatible with, and enhancing of, other leadership and management models such as total quality management, systems thinking, and community-building.

In the area of corporate education and training programs, many management and leadership consultants now utilize servant-leadership materials as part of their ongoing work with corporations. Among these companies are Synovus Financial, The Toro Company, and Arthur Andersen. A number of consultants and educators are now touting the benefits to be gained in building a total quality management approach upon a servant-leadership foundation. Through internal training and education, institutions

are discovering that servant-leadership can truly improve how business is developed and conducted, while still successfully turning a profit.

Personal Transformation

The sixth application of servant-leadership involves its use in programs relating to personal growth and transformation. Servant-leadership operates at both the institutional and personal levels. For individuals, it offers a means to personal growth—spiritually, professionally, emotionally, and intellectually. It has ties to the ideas of M. Scott Peck (*The Road Less Traveled*), Parker Palmer (*The Active Life*), Ann McGee-Cooper (*You Don't Have to Go Home from Work Exhausted!*), and others who have written on expanding human potential. A particular strength of servant-leadership is that it encourages everyone to actively seek opportunities to both serve and lead others, thereby setting up the potential for raising the quality of life throughout society.

Servant-Leadership and Multiculturalism

For some people, the word *servant* prompts an immediate negative connotation because of the oppression that many workers—particularly women and people of color—have historically endured. For some it may take a while to accept the positive usage of the word *servant*. However, those who are willing to dig a little deeper come to understand the inherent spiritual nature of what is intended by the pairing of *servant* and *leader*. The startling paradox of the term *servant-leadership* serves to prompt new insights.

In a Greenleaf Center newsletter article titled “Pluralistic Reflections on Servant-Leadership,” Juana Bordas has written: “Many women, minorities and people of color have long traditions of servant-leadership in their cultures. Servant-leadership has very old roots in many of the indigenous cultures. Cultures that were holistic, cooperative, communal, intuitive and spiritual. These cultures centered on being guardians of the future and respecting the ancestors who walked before.”