

# *Great Leaders Grow* *Discussion Guide*

---

## **Gain Knowledge: pg. 1-52**

1. After reading the introduction, what is the most important thing that determines a person's capacity to lead? Why do you think it is so important? (Hint: re-read the framed quote on page 27.)
2. On page six, Debbie tells Blake that "the best teams do life together". What does she mean by this? Is this an area in which your own team could grow?
3. What does it mean to be "a servant first and a leader second"? Is this something you are purposeful about in your leadership? What can you do to become more of a servant? Really think about how this would play out in your workplace.
4. On page 21, Debbie says there are two important aspects of servant leadership: *vision/direction* and *implementation*. What steps can you take to integrate these traits into your team?
5. Mr. Smith's motto is that "people are the most important decisions" a leader can make. Do you agree with this? What are some pros and cons of this perspective?

## **Reach Out to Others: pg. 53-72**

1. Debbie gives Blake this piece of advice on page 55: "Your goal is to go wide and deep". What is she referring to here? Why do you think going wide and deep in this area will make you a better leader?
2. According to this book, teaching is not just sharing information in a formal setting. It also takes place in informal settings, often in the form of stories and probing questions. Take a moment to think back: when was the last time you had an informal teaching moment? Where did it take place? And with whom (a team member, a family member, a friend)?
3. So far, we've met several characters in a variety of leadership positions. Take a minute to think about each one: does it seem like Sam is working to learn as a leader? Is he actively trying to reach out to others, or is he more focused on himself? What about Ms. Barnwell? What about *you*?

# Great Leaders Grow

## Discussion Guide

---

4. Not everyone Blake reaches out to is receptive: Ms. Barnwell thinks he's "brown-nosing" when he asks how he can serve her, and Sarah is suspicious of the "new guy". Have you ever experienced a team member who refuses to open up to you? How did you deal with it then? After reading about Blake's persistence and eventual success in each of these cases, how would you handle your own closed-off team member? (Try to think of real, actionable steps you could take).

### Opening Your World: pg. 73-91

1. "Growing, for great leaders, is like breathing. It's not optional." Debbie cautions Blake with these words when he casually refers to growing as a sort of "extra": something he'll work on if he is on top of his other work. What happens to leaders who stop growing? (hint: check out the framed quote on pg. 76)
2. The next step in the G.R.O.W. sequence is to "Open your world". Debbie makes an analogy between a leader's varied experiences and the colored paints on an artist's palette: the more colors on the palette, the more shades will show in the painting. Similarly, a leader who is constantly adding to their palette with many varied growing experiences will be more understanding and competent as a leader.
  - a. Using the list on pg. 79-80 as a guide, come up with several real, actionable ideas you will then use to expand your world *inside* your workplace.
  - b. Once you've done that, make another list based on the one on pg. 82. This one will guide you in the actions you can take to open your world *outside* your workplace.
3. The framed quote from Sam to Blake on pg. 87 reads, "Trying to help you... helps me." Are there ways you can rearrange things on your team so that people can grow more by helping others?

### Walking Toward Wisdom: pg. 92-112

1. Blake compares the G.R.O.W. metaphor to a treasure map, but Debbie points out a fundamental difference between the two. What was that important distinction?

## *Great Leaders Grow* *Discussion Guide*

---

2. “Wisdom is the *application* of knowledge, discernment, insight, experience, and judgment to make good decisions when the answer may not be obvious.” What four steps does Debbie suggest applying in order to grow in wisdom? (hint: see page 97) Make a plan to practice these steps, then stick to it. Brainstorm ways in which you could implement the pursuit of wisdom (through these steps) in your team.
3. Take the “Personal Assessment” on pg. 114-115, then follow the directions in the “What’s Next” section on pg. 116.