

High Flyers Course - Session 1

Closing the Gap

Hello and welcome to "High Flyers: 10 Attitudes to Unleash your leadership potential." My name is Mark Faithfull. I'm a speaker, teacher, trainer, coach, and mentor and my focus and mission is to develop the leadership potential of IT professionals. To my fellow geeks: I wish you welcome. If you have found yourself here and you are not working in IT then fear not - you will still get significant value and help from this course I am sure.

The leadership principles and attitudes I will cover of the next 10 lessons can be applied and used universally- in any industry and any walk of life.

My background is over two decades in corporate IT mainly in the financial services and construction industries (apart from the brief but enjoyable diversion into marketing with 4 blokes in a basement in Shoreditch watching Brittany Spears videos all day - but that's a story for another time). So coming from an IT background, my personal stories and illustrations will be from that industry - but that doesn't mean you have to be an IT geek to understand them and as I said the leadership principles you will learn can be applied by everyone.

Before I jump into the introduction and the first Leadership Attitude that High Flyers use to unleash their potential, I want to say thank you to my entire team who helped me create this program. I also want to express my gratitude to my mentors and teachers. I'm a certified coach and teach with the John Maxwell Team and John and his leadership teachings has shaped my career for over two decades and it's my privilege to be able to pay it forward and share the knowledge that has helped me through this course. I am also in the debt of the faculty at the John Maxwell team especially Paul Martinelli, Roddy Galbraith, Ed DaCosta and Christian Simpson who continue to teach me so much. And I'd like to specifically thank my wife Lydia who keeps me motivated and humble. Without them, this series would not exist.

So, let's jump into it. Some of you may know a little bit about my background, and some of you may not. So, let me give you the potted history. I was born near Bristol on the west coast of England in a little seaside town called Clevedon. My first year was spent living in a caravan because Mum & Dad couldn't afford a house. Today I live in a beautiful house next to the River Avon in the Cotswolds area of the UK.

My point is our start in life or our start in our career does not limit or dictate where we end up. It's wrong to think we are a product of our circumstances - we are not, we are a product of our decisions.

I am not a product of circumstances, I am a product of my decisions said Stephen Covey - and in my experience, he is right.

And this is a great time to introduce my Quotes to Note - through this course I'll be sharing lots of other people's wisdom - truths proven in the lives and careers of many people. Take note of these and invest some time pondering and thinking how you can apply these to your life.

When I left school I didn't go to university, instead I started working for a bank in the City of London and after a year was bored working in a bank branch and managed to get a transfer to the head office to join the IT team as a trainee. And I spent the next 20 years working in corporate IT ending up as a CTO and IT Director often working to rebuild and reboot failing teams and departments - creating processes and developing the people in those teams.

Do you know the expression we learn from our mistakes? Well, I've certainly learned a lot! Which is another way of saying I've made plenty of mistakes along the way.

Like the time I volunteered to help set up the PC for a new starter shortly after I started my career in IT. This was back in the day when

Windows 386 was a cool new technology and Word Perfect was everyone's favourite word processor... I remember the machine was an IBM PC AT - and I plugged in the big old TV screen of a monitor - it was one of those with the green text on the screen - and the keyboard and the mouse and the massive network cable. Then I turned on the PC - I could hear the base unit start to whirr and hum but the screen stayed dark. I also heard some shouting and swearing from around me. I forgot to mention it was a large open plan office with hundreds of little cubicles like a Dilbert Cartoon. Anyway I turned off the PC, checked all the cables were plugged in securely and then turned it on once more. Again I heard the whirr, again the screen stayed blank - and again I heard lots of complaining and swearing... That's odd I thought. Every time I turn this computer on - I hear people shouting and swearing. Clearly the thing to do would be prove my theory so I turned off the PC again, waited a minute and then turned it back on - and again all the shouting and swearing. How odd, I thought. So I pulled the PC off the desk and studied the cables on the back and after a little head scratching I realised what the problem was...

That office used a type of network called an IBM TokenRing - and the cables were big and fat and in fact were exactly the same as the VGA cables that we still use today to connect a PC to a projector or

screen. What I had managed to do was plug the PC screen into the network port and the network cable into the video socket - so every time I turned the PC on it sent the video signal down the network cable which then crashed the network and disconnected the hundreds of other terminals and PCs in the office... hence the shouting and swearing as everyone lost their work. You can't buy TokenRing networks anymore - I'm not surprised.

What did I learn from this experience? To read the labels on the sockets in future before plugging anything in to them!

Well that's enough of an introduction to me - let me tell you about this HIGH FLYERS course...

Introduction to HIGH FLYERS

Congratulations on taking an important step in your personal growth and success. Deciding to invest in yourself is the investment that will bring the biggest return in your whole life - but it's something that many people fail to do.

James Allen said:

People are anxious to improve their circumstances, but are unwilling to improve themselves; therefore, they remain bound.

Through this course I will share with you 10 key attitudes that, if you work to adopt them, will improve you and as a result you will see your circumstances change.

Success in your career, or with your clients if you work as a consultant, is driven by two things

Your attitude and your aptitude

Your attitude is how you think, how you react to situations, your personality and so on. Do people want to sit next to you in the office?

Your aptitude is your skills - your technical abilities, your experience, your ability to actually complete the tasks that form the

job accurately and to the level of quality your boss or client wants.

Do people want to have to deal with the work you have done - is it done right?

Through the HIGH FLYERS course, you will have the opportunity to develop and improve your attitudes in many areas.

As a result of completing the HIGH FLYERS course you will

- increase your ability to lead and influence other people
- have more confidence in new or challenging situations
- improve your ability to prioritise and plan
- model the behaviour you want to see in other members of your family or team
- recognise opportunities and take advantage of them
- break out of your comfort zone and do the things you have always wanted to do
- be recognised for your contribution and earn a promotion

First let's look at Aptitude

Your aptitude is your skills - technical abilities, knowledge, soft skills like leadership and time management, technical certifications but ultimately it's not about courses you can list on

your CV or certificates you have in desk drawer or hung on the wall - it's your ability to apply that knowledge and skills - to use them to do a great job that is of value to your boss or client.

How technically accurate is your work, do you do things the right way?

In IT there are often several ways to solve a problem - there is a strong creative streak in IT - from development to systems administration. And many problems can be solved in several different ways. Some of those solutions are elegant and simple, other solutions to the same problem might be complicated and convoluted. Simplicity is always valued over complexity - because simple is easy to support, easy to debug, easy to change and easy to understand. But the simple solution often requires more thought and skills to arrive at than the complicated solution. To get to simple you really have to think

**That's been one of my mantras - focus and simplicity.
Simple can be harder than complex: You have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. But it's worth it in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains.**

Steve Jobs

Different companies have varying attitudes to training and how much they are willing to spend on training their staff. If the

only training and professional learning you do is supplied by your employer then you are less likely to get a promotion or payrise than someone who invests in themselves.

Why? Because generally a business will spend money on training to help you do your current job better - give you the technical skills you need to meet any regulations or certifications you need for the current role you have.

However, if your aim is to progress your career and advance into a new role - this is down to you - if you want a job in project management then you need to learn how to be a project manager before you start applying for those jobs. if you want to be a leader, you need to study leadership and start putting those lessons into practice in your current role before you can seek a leadership role in your current organisation or beyond it. Why - because employers and clients want to see experience to validate that you can already do the job you are applying for

Think about it this way: You are already paid to turn up on time, work diligently and complete your assigned task accurately and on time. To make yourself more valuable you have to do more than your job description - you have to add more value than you have already been paid for

You add more value first, and get paid for it later

We will look at this more in lesson 2, so let's leave it there for now and turn our attention to Attitudes

The way we think - our attitudes - have a massive influence on our behaviour, emotions and decision making

Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.

Winston Churchill

When I am interviewing someone for a job, I always will pick the candidate with a better attitude over one with stronger skills. Skills are much easier to acquire than a healthier attitude.

The greatest day in your life and mine is when we take total responsibility for our attitudes. That's the day we truly grow up. John C. Maxwell

Our attitudes influence and even control our behaviour and emotions in surprisingly powerful ways. Learning how to choose and adopt the attitudes that control your thoughts and emotions will lead to greater success and satisfaction in your life

It's attitude that determines our confidence levels and charisma, it's attitude that controls our career progress, it's attitude that governs how we respond to stress and it's attitude that determines how we

overcome set-backs. I have learned that it is attitude, above all things, that determines our success as a leader.

And the great news is - we are 100% in control of our attitudes - but we don't always stop to think what they are

We choose what attitudes we have right now. And it's a continuing choice.

John C. Maxwell

Like your attitude to learning - it's your responsibility and no-one else's to make sure you know everything you need to know in order to do the job you want or to live the life you desire. Your aptitude will enable you to do the job- your attitude will enable you to get the job:

Your attitude, not your aptitude, will determine your altitude. Zig Ziglar

So let me quickly give you an overview of the 10 key attitudes we will explore together over the next few weeks:

Course Overview

Learning

Keep on learning and put what you learn into practice - it has been said that the biggest gap in the world is the gap between what we KNOW and what we actually DO - close the gap between what you know and what you do

The unsuccessful person is burdened by learning, and prefers to walk down familiar paths. Their distaste for learning stunts their growth and limits their influence.

John C. Maxwell

Honesty

Stop stealing from your boss - I don't mean pens from the stationary cupboard - but if you are doing that stop it as well - I mean stop adding less value each day than you have been paid for. Turn it around and add more value than you have been paid for - that is what will make it a no-brainer to give you a promotion or pay-rise

Remember:

You are not paid for the hour, you are paid for the value you bring to the hour - Jim Rohn

Vision

Be able to picture a better version of the world and work towards making it happen. Be able to share that with other people - up and down the organisation - so they buy into your vision and help you make it happen.

Don't be a passenger in your own life or your own career - get in the driver's seat and decide where to go

A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.

John C. Maxwell

Persistence

You know it takes what it takes - just because something is hard, or boring that is no reason not to do it. The only question you should ask is does it add value followed by what is the shortest route to get there?

Patience, persistence and perspiration make an unbeatable combination for success. Napoleon Hill

Focus

The ability to prioritise is absolutely key to success in IT - or any other field for that matter. There is always more work to do than people and hours to do it. So being able to focus on the things your boss considers important is the way to unlock your promotion. The

ability to pick the right things to prioritise is what defines a high flyer

The key is not to prioritise what's on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities. Stephen Covey

Courage

Nothing worthwhile will ever be achieved inside your comfort zone! Be prepared to take risks and do it scared - but do it!

If you want something you've never had, then you've got to do something you've never done

Intuition

I've got a bad feeling about this a wise man once said. Learn to trust your gut and be prepared to make intuitive leaps

Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.

Steve Jobs

Leadership

Leadership is influence - nothing more, nothing less. Your leadership ability will act as a lid or ceiling on your ability to progress in any organisation. By increasing your influence in your

organisation you demonstrate your readiness for promotion. Study the Laws of Leadership from John Maxwell.

Relationships

Your attitude to other people - who you allow to speak into your life as well as who you partner with will either lift you or limit you - so learn how to choose wisely.

Law of the Inner Circle: A leader's potential is determined by those who are closest to them

Giving

The Law of Addition: Leaders add value to others by serving others
The bottom line in leadership isn't how far we advance ourselves but how far we advance others. Our willingness to give, our ability to sacrifice and make trade offs - to give up a lesser goal to achieve a higher goal is essential to achieve the highest levels of success.

This brings our introduction to an end - in the next video we will dive into the detail of the first of our 10 Key Attitudes of Leadership - our attitude to learning - see you there!

Attitude 1: Learning – Closing the Gap

Welcome to Attitude number 1 in the HIGH FLYERS course - the 10 Attitudes of Leaders

Leaders are learners - and our attitude to learning is key to unlocking our potential and our success as a leader.

Leonardo Da Vinci said:

*I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. **Knowing** is not enough; we must **apply**. Being willing is not enough, we must **do!***

The first attitude of High Flyers is that they **apply** the knowledge they gain, and allow it to **change** their **behaviour** and how they make **decisions**.

The purpose of learning is not education for the sake of it but rather the changes that result as you apply what you learn.

It has been said that the biggest gap in the world is the gap between what we KNOW and what we actually DO - in this lesson we will explore ways to close the gap between what you know and what you do

You see, there's a difference between knowing a thing and then allowing that knowledge of the thing to shape your actions. There's a lot of people in our lives who say they know something, and all of us know how to do better things in our lives, myself included. I know that if I sit on the sofa, and I eat a huge slice of Victoria Sponge Cake every night, that that's not going help me reach my weight loss goal. But you know, there were times in my life where I sat on the sofa every single night, and I ate a huge slice of Victoria Sponge Cake. See, we don't always do what we know.

Ask any room full of people - how do you lose weight- everyone will know the answer - diet and exercise - but not everyone will DO anything about it. We don't always do what we know.

Most sales people know that if they simply ask for referrals and stay connected with their prospects and customers, they'll increase their sales. But they don't always do what they know.

Most people know, in relationships with our loved ones, that if we started our day and ended each day looking into the eyes of those people who are most important in our lives and tell them that we love them, that we care about them and how significant they are to

us, those relationships would deepen. But we don't always do what we know.

Learning can be hard work - it requires expending mental energy which is tiring. It also requires that we admit that we don't know something before we are prepared and able to learn something new.

The unsuccessful person is burdened by learning, and prefers to walk down familiar paths. Their distaste for learning stunts their growth and limits their influence. John C. Maxwell

That's a hard saying - but it's true - very true.

Avoid Destination Disease

There's a book called *The True Believer* written by Eric Hoffer, and he said something very profound. He said that for us to learn anything, it requires a certain degree of confidence. He said if you have too little confidence, you think you **cannot** learn. And if you have too much confidence, then you think you don't **need to** learn. Some people can be so confident that they think they have nothing left to learn so they don't try or worse they throw away the teaching because they think they don't need it.

Watch out for Destination Disease!

Destination Disease can strike at any time, and it has cut many promising careers short.

People with Destination Disease think they have arrived - they think they have learned what they need to learn, they think they have done what they need to do and they think it is now time to kick back and relax

You cannot teach something new to people with Destination Disease- they might acknowledge the merit of what you are saying - they might even be able to name a few **other** people who could do with learning that lesson - but they will refuse to see how it applies to them!

If you do not adopt a leader's attitude to learning you put yourself at risk of Destination Disease!

Please, don't make that mistake as you listen to these lessons. Have enough confidence in yourself that you will grow and develop as a result of the things I am going to share with you - but don't be so cocky and confident that you think you have nothing to learn and you don't need to take any of this on-board!

People who are willing to learn end up growing and developing - it is not smooth sailing all the way but it is rewarding.

As I work as a coach with individuals and teams I have the great pleasure of seeing people's understanding changing - and with new understanding comes new opportunity.

Well- that's not really true is it? The opportunities were always there- it's just that the people I was coaching turned into someone who was able to take advantage of the opportunity that had been there all along!

And that's my aim and my desire through this course - that your understanding would develop so that you turn into the kind of person who is able to take advantage of the opportunities that are in front of you.

John Maxwell says **that Opportunities are never lost - they are just found by someone else** - opportunities are never lost - they are just found by someone else. The purpose of this course is to enable you to unleash your full potential as a leader so you too can be a High Flyer, able to take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way.

There is an ancient saying – seek and ye shall find – based on the words of Jesus of Nazareth. And it means simply that you will find what you are looking for. Let me give you an example – have you ever met someone who is always getting offended and taking offence at what someone said or didn't say – did or did not do to them? These people find offence because they are looking for it – seek and ye shall find.

On the other hand, I expect you know someone who is always finding opportunities, always making new connections – wherever they go it seems they bump into a new client or a new business partner. Why is this? Because they are looking for opportunities – they expect to find them and so keep looking and when they see something that looks remotely like an opportunity they act on it. Seek and ye shall find.

The truth is, in order for any of us to achieve success in life, it requires a risk – it requires a step of faith. When I was younger, part of my thinking pattern said that I had to play the hand I was dealt based on my awareness and belief. So, it never occurred to me that I could change my life. Perhaps you've been told that, too. I found out that it's not true. I found out that not only can we throw our

hand that we were dealt back to the centre of the table, but - if we choose to, we can gain understanding, expand our awareness of our potential, and move beyond the convictions of our limiting belief. If we begin to study and gain an understanding of these Attitudes, these thinking patterns of High Flyers in our life, we can become the **dealer** of the cards in our own life.

A good friend of mine, Bart, was born with a disability called Arthrogryposis - this means his joints do not work properly or at all - when he was born the doctors said he would never walk and laughed at his mother when she asked if he would ever be able to play the piano. Bart now tours widely giving inspirational talks on overcoming the hand that you were dealt- and he walks onto the stage and then plays the piano at every event.

Bart has a brilliant phrase he uses in his talks, he says: there is another word for difficult, there is another word for hard - that word is POSSIBLE. Just consider that for a moment. If something is difficult it means it is possible, but will require more thought and energy than something that is easy - but it can still be done - it is still... possible.

Too often, we make the mistake of treating anything hard or difficult as if it were *impossible*, but that's just not right. Learning

can be hard, there can be an emotional price, a financial price, a time price - but if we are willing to pay the price, the return on that investment will be life changing.

The cost of learning

Some people might object to the cost of learning. They look at the price of the book or the price of a course and they think that is not worth the price, but as Jim Rohn says:

It isn't what the book costs; it's what it will cost you if you don't read it. Jim Rohn

You see when we consider the investment of buying a book or a course - we are really evaluating the worth of two things.

On the one hand, we are evaluating the worth of the knowledge that we will gain if we buy the book or course - will the knowledge add value to our lives that equals or exceeds our investment.

On the other hand, we are also subconsciously considering our own worth - am I worth spending a thousand pounds on for training to make me better? Because if you don't think you are worth it, you will never invest in you and spend money on making you better.

Of course, the irony is, the investment we make in ourselves results in us becoming better, it results in us being able to bring more value to the market - it results in us being more valuable.

So actually a big part of the decision making process when we consider investing in learning is what we actually believe about ourselves and what do we really believe we are capable of achieving our life.

In Dr. Maxwell Maltz's classic book *Psycho-Cybernetics*, he clearly states that a person does not get what they want in their life, instead - he says - what they get in their life is what they think they are capable of achieving, in other words what they believe. He says a person will never outperform their own self-image or their own self-belief.

Henry Ford said something similar - he said: **whether you believe you can or you believe you can't - you are right!**

And so, we end up realising that our attitude to learning is really quite complicated. Because it's not simply about the merits of learning as a standalone concept - I think most people would agree education is a good thing - for other people...

But when we consider spending our own time and our own money on our own education then our beliefs about ourselves - especially our self-limiting beliefs - have a massive shaping effect on our attitude to learning.

It's been said that one of the problems with our current school system is that it tells our children *what* to think but not *how* to think. In my work as a teacher and coach, I spend a large proportion of my time challenging my clients thinking patterns and thought processes. The way we think - our thinking patterns - are just as important as the knowledge that we have.

The thinking patterns we use every day are what differentiate High Flyers from everyone else. Now I'm not the first person to notice this!

Back in the late 1950s Benjamin Tregoe and Charles Kepner were both working at the RAND corporation and they noticed that some people just did better than others - were more effective and successful than others - made better decisions. But this wasn't relating to their IQ, or their education or their training they discovered. No, it turns out this was all down to how those people

thought. Kepner and Tregoe spent years talking to these high performers and were able to document the processes – the thinking patterns- they followed when making decisions and when making plans and when solving problems and documented all this in the ground breaking book the Rational Manager. They then went on to form the successful Kepner-Tregoe consulting firm which is still helping companies transform today. What is Kepner-Tregoe’s secret sauce? They teach people how to think! They have documented and flow-charted thinking patterns and thought processes that if you follow them you make better decisions and can solve complex problems more easily. If you have seen the movie Apollo 13, and you remember how the back room boys at NASA worked out how to modify the space capsule while it was still in space to keep the astronauts alive- that was Kepner-Tregoe analytical trouble shooting processes in action.

When my father was working for Hewlett-Packard’s enterprise field service organisation back in the 1980’s he was instrumental in introducing the Kepner-Tregoe methodologies to the field engineers in the UK and for the next 5 years HP was rated as having the best field service organisation in the industry.

See that chap in the white waistcoat – second from the left – that’s Gene Kranz, the flight controller for Apollo 13 – he was the guy in

charge on the ground, responsible for getting the astronauts homes safely. I had the honour of meeting Gene in 1992 - he is a truly amazing chap and I thoroughly recommend his autobiography called Failure Is Not an Option - talk about mission critical!

So what does all this all mean for our attitude of learning?

I think it means that a leader's attitude to learning incorporates all these ideas:

- The knowledge we acquire
- The thinking patterns we use to apply that knowledge
- The value of who we will become when we apply the knowledge

I wonder, are you a bit like me - do you have some books on your shelf or in your Kindle that you bought and intended to read but have not quite got around to them yet?

If that's true for you too then we both need to be reminded of what Jim Rohn said:

The book you don't read won't help Jim Rohn

We should not be in the business of shelf-development - loading our bookshelf with unread books will not help us one little bit - we need a plan!

Learning doesn't happen by accident

In the great book the 15 Invaluable Laws of Growth John Maxwell explains the Law of Intentionality. He says that **Growth does not just happen, growth is not an automatic process.** You see, most people accept their lives, they don't lead their lives. They wake up in the morning and wonder what the day will bring... Don't fall into that way of thinking - don't wonder what the day will bring - decide what you are going to bring to the day!

Make a choice, set a plan - decide how many hours you will invest every week in your personal growth and learning.

And don't just read the book or study the course - set time aside to apply the learning.

Ask yourself - what am I going to change next week because of what I have learned this week? The change is key thing - because your results will not change until you change.

Life doesn't get better by chance, it gets better by change

Jim Rohn

I remember when I was studying for my certification to join the John Maxwell Team, one of the people who was in my team at the time commented that she had noticed my leadership style change and improve over the last few months. Head knowledge on its own

does not change our results, but when we apply that knowledge - when we close the gap between what we know and what we do - then we see breakthrough and improvements in our life.

Gaining knowledge is easy - reading books is easy - but putting that knowledge into action, applying that knowledge to the way we live - to move from a place of mental assent - to do more than simply acknowledge the truth of a thing and to instead change the way you live and act as a result- that is what marks the difference of a High Flyer.

When we expand our awareness of the true scale of our God-given potential, when we challenge the convictions of the limiting beliefs we impose on ourselves or allow others to impose upon us, and replace them with new empowering beliefs, when we gain a true understanding of who we are and, more importantly, whose we are, and adopt the Attitudes of Leadership in our lives, we will experience life as a high flyer.

Jim Rohn said **you can make progress, or you can make excuses**
- but you cannot do both!

Now let's look at helping you apply this first lesson. Don't skip this step - set a pattern that you will follow through this whole course.

The power of the HIGH FLYERS approach is the enforced gap between each set of lessons which gives you time to reflect on what you have learned and put that learning into practice.

In the downloads section of the course you will find 'Personal Application Cheat Sheet 1' that looks like this...

Download this PDF or Word document now and spend the next 30 minutes or so answering the questions. Don't just do it in your head- I used to try it that way but it doesn't work because you forget what you thought 30 seconds later! Write it down - type in to the document or print it off and write on it in crayon - whatever works for you - but write it down and leave it where you can see it every day for the next weeks as you actively work to apply what you have learned to your daily life.

You can ask yourself, "How do I apply this principle in new learning? To what area of my life? How does this change my conditions? How does this change my circumstances? What is the feedback that I've gotten from this?"

You know, sometimes we define the feedback as failure.

Sometimes we define the feedback as success. The truth is it's

neither success nor failure; it's just feedback and it allows us to re-evaluate and make the necessary adjustments. And then take the next step forward in our life.

No-one ever gets it right first time - don't get discouraged when you learn how **not** to do something - take the feedback and try again. Sometimes we win, sometimes we learn - either option leaves us better off.

You are not the product of your circumstances, you are the product of your decisions.

The mistake that many people make is that they fail to APPLY the knowledge they gain- they do not close the gap between what they know and what they do - and they do not choose what they want for themselves- they fail to make their own decisions and so their life is the result of allowing other people to make the decisions.

This has been Mark Faithfull and I look forward to seeing you in the next lesson which is going to challenge your understanding of what exactly it is your boss or your clients are paying you for - amongst other things. Lesson two is on the attitude of Honesty and it's called Stop Stealing from your Boss.

I hope you'll enjoy the rest of the series.

See you there soon!

Unleash your potential!